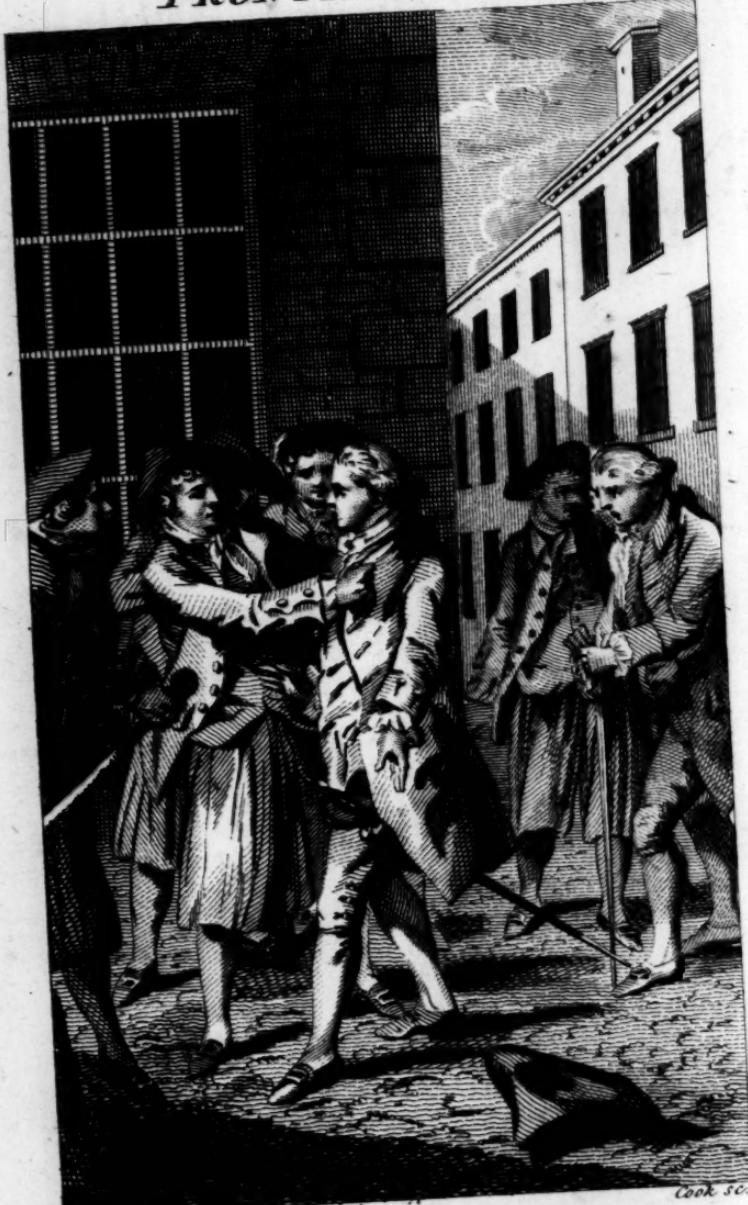


FRONTISPICE.

Vol. VIII



Dodd del.

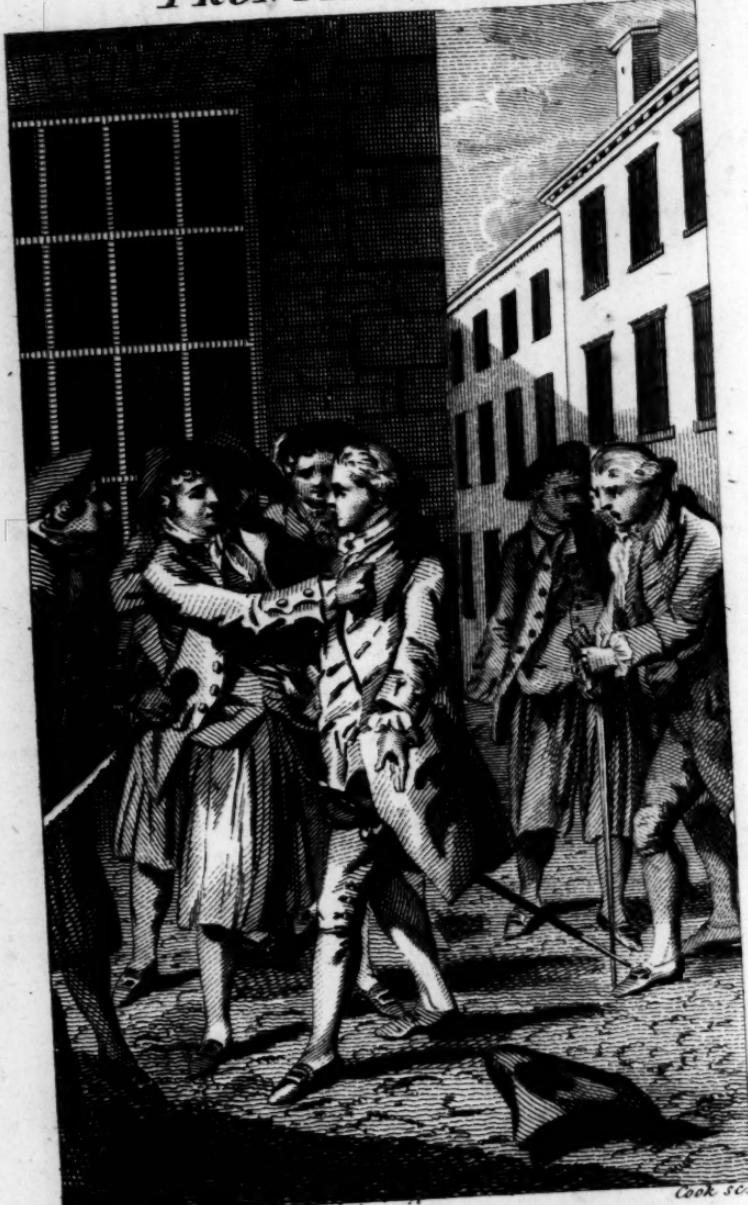
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THE
HISTORY
OF
TOM JONES,
A
FOUNDLING.

By HENRY FIELDING, Esquire.

—*Mores hominum multorum vidit*—

VOL. VIII.

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ИАМИНШ НЧЭСОЕ түркеси
жазылганын мактабасы

ЖАКСАНДЫР

THE
HISTORY
OF A
FOUNDLING.

[Continuation of BOOK XIV.—CHAP. VI.]

JONES had scarce spoke these words, when Mrs. Miller, who heard them all, suddenly threw open the door, and coming out to him in a flood of tears, said, ‘ O Mr. Jones! you are certainly one of the best young men alive. I give you a thousand thanks for your kind offer of your service; but, alas! Sir, it is out of your power to preserve my poor girl. O my child, my child! She is undone, she is ruined for ever! I hope, Madam,’ said Jones, ‘ no villain O MR. Jones,’ said she, ‘ that villain who yesterday left my lodgings, hath betrayed my poor girl; hath destroyed her.—I know you are a man of honour. You have a good—a noble heart, Mr. Jones. The actions to which I have been myself a witness, could proceed from no other. I will tell you all: nay, indeed, it is impossible, after what hath happened, to keep it a secret. That Nightingale, that barbarous villain, hath undone my daughter.—She is—She is—oh! Mr. Jones, my girl is with child by him; and in that condition he hath deserted her.

' Here ! here, Sir, is his cruel letter; read it, Mr.
Jones, and tell me if such another monster lives.'

The letter was as follows :

' Dear Nancy,
AS I found it impossible to mention to you what, I am afraid, will be no less shocking to you than it is to me, I have taken this method to inform you, that my father insists upon my immediately paying my addresses to a young lady of fortune, whom he hath provided for my—I need not write the detested word. Your own good understanding will make you sensible, how entirely I am obliged to an obedience by which I shall be for ever excluded from your dear arms. The fondness of your mother may encourage you to trust her with the unhappy consequence of our love, which may be easily kept a secret from the world, and for which I will take care to provide, as I will for you. I wish you may feel less on this account than I have suffered : but summon all your fortitude to your assistance, and forgive and forget the man, whom nothing but the prospect of certain ruin could have forced to write this letter. I bid you forget me, I mean only as a lover ; but the best of friends you shall ever find in

' Your faithful, though unhappy
J. N.'

When Jones had read this letter, they both stood silent during a minute, looking at each other ; at last he began thus : ' I cannot express, Madam, how much I am shocked at what I have read ; yet let me beg you, in one particular, to take the writer's advice. Consider the reputation of your daughter.' — It is gone, it is lost, Mr. Jones,' cry'd she, as well as her innocence. She received the letter in a room full of company, and immediately swooning away upon opening it, the contents were known to every one present. But the loss of her reputation,

A FOUNDLING.

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tion, bad as it is, is not the worst; I shall lose my child; she hath attempted twice to destroy herself already: and though she hath been hitherto prevented, vows she will not out-live it; nor could I myself out-live any accident of that nature.—What then will become of my little Betsy, a helpless infant orphan? And the poor little wretch will, I believe, break her heart at the miseries with which she sees her sister and myself distracted, while she is ignorant of the cause.—O 'tis the most sensible, and best natured little thing. The barbarous cruel —hath destroyed us all. O my poor children! Is this the reward of all my cares? Is this the fruit of all my prospects? Have I so cheerfully undergone all the labours and duties of a mother? Have I been so tender of their infancy, so careful of their education? Have I been toiling so many years, denying myself even the conveniences of life to provide some little sustenance for them, to lose one or both in such a manner?" Indeed, Madam," said Jones, with tears in his eyes, "I pity you from my soul."— "O Mr. Jones," answered she, "even you, though I know the goodness of your heart, can have no idea of what I feel. The best, the kindest, the most dutiful of children! O my poor Nancy, the darling of my soul! the delight of my eyes! the pride of my heart! too much, indeed, my pride; for to those foolish, ambitious hopes, arising from her beauty, I owe her ruin. Alas! I saw with pleasure the liking which this young man had for her. I thought it an honourable affection; and flattered my foolish vanity with the thoughts of seeing her married to one so much her superior. And a thousand times in my presence, nay, often in yours, he hath endeavoured to sooth and encourage these hopes by the most generous expressions of disinterested love, which he hath always directed to my poor girl, and which I, as well as she, believed to be real. Could I have believed that these

‘ were only snares laid to betray the innocence of my child, and for the ruin of us all?’—At these words little Betsy came running into the room, crying, ‘ Dear mamma, for heaven’s sake come to my sister; for she is in another fit, and my cousin can’t hold her.’ Mrs. Miller immediately obeyed the summons; but first ordered Betsy to stay with Mr. Jones, and begged him to entertain her a few minutes, saying, in the most pathetic voice, ‘ Good heaven! let me preserve one of my children at least.’

Jones, in compliance with this request, did all he could to comfort the little girl, though he was, in reality, himself very highly affected with Mrs. Miller’s story. He told her, ‘ her sister would be soon very well again: that by taking on in that manner, she would not only make her sister worse, but make her mother ill too.’ ‘ Indeed, Sir,’ says she, ‘ I would not do any thing to hurt them for the world. I would burst my heart rather than they should see me cry.—But my poor sister can’t see me cry.—I am afraid she will never be able to see me cry any more. Indeed, I can’t part with her; indeed I can’t.—And then poor mamma too, what will become of her!—She says she will die too, and leave me: but I am resolved I won’t be left behind.’ ‘ And are you not afraid to die, my little Betsy?’ said Jones. ‘ Yes,’ answered she, ‘ I was always afraid to die; because I must have left my mamma, and my sister; but I am not afraid of going any where with those I love.’

Jones was so pleased with this answer, that he eagerly kissed the child; and soon after Mrs. Miller returned, saying, ‘ She thanked heaven, Nancy was now come to herself. And now, Betsy,’ says she, ‘ you may go in; for your sister is better, and longs to see you.’ She then turned to Jones, and began to renew her apologies for having disappointed him of his breakfast.

‘ I hope, Madam,’ said Jones, ‘ I shall have a more exquinte

exquisite repast than any you could have provided for me. This, I assure you, will be the case, if I can do any service to this little family of love. But whatever success may attend my endeavours, I am resolved to attempt it. I am very much deceived in Mr. Nightingale, if, notwithstanding what hath happened, he hath not much goodness of heart at the bottom, as well as a very violent affection for your daughter. If this be the case, I think the picture which I shall lay before him, will affect him. Endeavour, madam, to comfort yourself, and Miss Nancy as well as you can. I will go instantly in quest of Mr. Nightingale; and I hope to bring you good news.'

Mrs. Miller fell upon her knees, and invoked all the blessings of heaven upon Mr. Jones; to which she afterwards added the most passionate expressions of gratitude. He then departed to find Mr. Nightingale, and the good woman returned to comfort her daughter, who was somewhat cheared at what her mother told her; and both joined in resounding the praises of Mr. Jones.

C H A P. VII.

The interview between Mr. Jones and Mr. Nightingale.

THE good or evil we confer on others, very often, I believe, recoils on ourselves. For as men of a benign disposition enjoy their own acts of beneficence, equally with those to whom they are done, so there are scarce any natures so entirely diabolical, as to be capable of doing injuries, without paying themselves some pangs, for the ruin which they bring on their fellow creatures.

Mr. Nightingale, at least, was not such a person. On the contrary, Jones found him in his new lodgings, sitting melancholy by the fire, and silently lamenting the unhappy situation in which he had placed poor Nancy. He no sooner saw his friend appear,

than he rose hastily to meet him; and after much congratulation said, ‘ nothing could have been more opportune than this kind visit; for I was never more in the spleen in my life.’

‘ I am sorry,’ answered Jones, ‘ that I bring news very unlikely to relieve you; nay, what I am convinced must, of all other, shock you the most. However, it is necessary you should know it. Without further preface then, I come to you, Mr. Nightingale, from a worthy family, which you have involved in misery and ruin.’ Mr. Nightingale changed colour at these words; but Jones, without regarding it, proceeded, in the liveliest manner, to paint the tragical story, with which the reader was acquainted in the last chapter.

Nightingale never once interrupted the narration, though he discovered violent emotions at many parts of it. But when it was concluded, after fetching a deep sigh, he said, ‘ What you tell me, my friend, affects me in the tenderest manner. Sure there never was so cursed an accident as the poor girl’s betraying my letter. Her reputation might otherwise have been safe, and the affair might have remained a profound secret; and then the girl might have gone off never the worse; for many such things happen in this town: and if the husband should suspect a little, when it is too late, it will be his wiser conduct to conceal his suspicion both from his wife and the world.’

‘ Indeed, my friend,’ answered Jones, ‘ this could not have been the case with your poor Nancy. You have so entirely gained her affections, that it is the loss of you, and not of her reputation, which afflicts her, and will end in the destruction of her and her family.’ Nay, for that matter, I promise you,’ cries Nightingale, ‘ she hath my affections so absolutely, that my wife, whoever she is to be, will have very little share in them.’ ‘ And is it possible then,’ said Jones, ‘ you can think of deserting her?’ ‘ Why what can I do?’ answered the other. ‘ Ask Miss Nancy,

' Nancy,' replied Jones, warmly. ' In the condition to which you have reduced her, I sincerely think she ought to determine what reparation you shall make her. Her interest alone, and not yours, ought to be your sole consideration. But if you ask me what you shall do, What can you do less,' cries Jones, ' than fulfil the expectations of her family, and her own? Nay, I sincerely tell you they were mine too, ever since I first saw you together. You will pardon me, if I presume on the friendship you have favoured me with, moved as I am with compassion for those poor creatures. But your own heart will best suggest to you, whether you have never intended, by your conduct, to persuade the mother, as well as the daughter, into an opinion, that you designed honourably: and if so, though there may have been no direct promise of marriage in the case, I will leave to your own good understanding, how far you are bound to proceed.'

' Nay, I must not only confess what you have hinted,' said Nightingale; ' but, I am afraid, even that very promise you mention I have given.' ' And can you, after owning that,' said Jones, ' hesitate a moment?' ' Consider, my friend,' answered the other; ' I know you are a man of honour, and would advise no one to act contrary to its rules; if there were no other objection, can I, after this publication of her disgrace, think of such an alliance with honour?' ' Undoubtedly,' replied Jones, ' and the very best and truest honour, which is goodness, requires it of you. As you mention a scruple of this kind, you will give me leave to examine it. Can you, with honour, be guilty of having, under false pretences, deceived a young woman and her family, and of having, by these means, treacherously robbed her of her innocence? Can you, with honour, be the knowing, the wilful, nay, I must add, the artful contriver of the ruin of a human being? Can you with honour destroy the fame, the peace, nay, probably both the

* life and soul too of this creature? Can honour bear the thought that this creature is a tender, helpless, defenceless young woman? A young woman who loves, who doats on you, who dies for you; who hath placed the utmost confidence in your promises; and to that confidence hath sacrificed every thing which is dear to her? Can honour support such contemplations as these a moment?"

"Common sense, indeed," said Nightingale, "warrants all you say; but yet you well know the opinion of the world is so much the contrary, that was I to marry a whore, though my own, I should be ashamed of ever showing my face again."

"Fie upon it, Mr. Nightingale," said Jones, "do not call her by so ungenerous a name: when you promised to marry her, she became your wife; and she hath sinned more against prudence than virtue. And what is this world, which you would be ashamed to face, but the vile, the foolish, and the profligate? Forgive me, if I say such a shame must proceed from false modesty, which always attends false honour as its shadow.—But I am well assured there is not a man of real sense and goodness in the world, who would not honour and applaud the action. But admit no other would, would not your own heart, my friend, applaud it? And do not the warm, rapturous sensations, which we feel from the consciousness of an honest, noble, generous, benevolent action, convey more delight to the mind, than the undeserved praise of millions? Set the alternative fairly before your eyes. On the one side, see this poor, unhappy, tender, believing girl, in the arms of her wretched mother, breathing her last. Hear her breaking heart in agonies, sighing out your name; and lamenting, rather than accusing, the cruelty which weighs her down to destruction. Paint to your imagination the circumstances of her fond, despairing parent, driven to madness, or, perhaps, to death, by the loss of her lovely daughter. View

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the poor helpless orphan-infant: and when your mind hath dwelt a moment only on such ideas, consider yourself as the cause of all the ruin of this poor, little, worthy, defenceless family. On the other side, consider yourself as relieving them from their temporary sufferings. Think with what joy, with what transports, that lovely creature will fly to your arms. See her blood returning to her pale cheeks, her fire to her languid eyes, and raptures to her tortured breast. Consider the exultations of her mother, the happiness of all. Think of this little family made, by one act of yours, completely happy. Think of this alternative, and sure I am mistaken in my friend, if it requires any long deliberation, whether he will sink these wretches down for ever, or, by one generous, noble resolution, raise them all from the brink of misery and despair, to the highest pitch of human happiness. Add to this but one consideration more; the consideration that it is your duty so to do.—That the misery from which you will relieve these poor people, is the misery which you yourself have wilfully brought upon them.'

'O my dear friend,' cries Nightingale, 'I wanted not your eloquence to rouse me. I pity poor Nancy from my soul, and would willingly give any thing in my power, that no familiarities had ever passed between us. Nay, believe me, I had many struggles with my passion before I could prevail with myself to write that cruel letter, which hath caused all the misery in that unhappy family. If I had no inclinations to consult but my own, I woud marry her to-morrow morning: I would, by heaven; but you will easily imagine how impossible it would be to prevail on my father to consent to such a match; besides, he hath provided another for me; and to-morrow, by his express command, I am to wait on the lady.'

'I have not the honour to know your father,' said Jones; 'but suppose he could be persuaded, would you

you yourself consent to the only means of preserving these poor people?" "As eagerly as I would pursue my happiness," answered Nightingale; "for I never shall find it in any other woman—O my dear friend, could you imagine what I have felt within these twelve hours for my poor girl, I am convinced she would not engross all your pity. Passion leads me only to her; and if I had any foolish scruples of honour, you have fully satisfied them; could my father be induced to comply with my desires, nothing would be wanting to complete my own happiness, or that of my Nancy."

"Then I am resolved to undertake it," said Jones. "You must not be angry with me, in whatever light it may be necessary to set this affair, which, you may depend on it, could not otherwise be long hid from him: for things of this nature make a quick progress, when once they get abroad, as this unhappily hath already. Besides, should any fatal accident follow, as upon my soul I am afraid will, unless immediately prevented, the public would ring of your name in a manner which, if your father hath common humanity, must offend him. If you will therefore tell me where I may find the old gentleman, I will not lose a moment in the business; which while I pursue, you cannot do a more generous action than by paying a visit to the poor girl. You will find I have not exaggerated in the account I have given of the wretchedness of the family."

Nightingale immediately consented to the proposal; and now having acquainted Jones with his father's lodging, and the coffee-house where he would most probably find him, he hesitated a moment, and then said; "My dear Tom, you are going to undertake an impossibility. If you knew my father, you would never think of obtaining his consent.—Stay, there is one way—Suppose you told him I was already married, it might be easier to reconcile him

'to

' to the fact after it was done ; and, upon my honour,
' I am so affected with what you have said, and I
' love my Nancy so passionately, I almost wish it
' was done, whatever might be the consequence.'

Jones greatly approved the hint, and promised to pursue it. They then separated, Nightingale to visit his Nancy, and Jones in quest of the old gentleman.

C H A P. VIII.

What passed between Jones and old Mr. Nightingale; with the arrival of a person not yet mentioned in this history.

NOtwithstanding the sentiment of the Roman satirist, which denies the divinity of Fortune, and the opinion of Seneca to the same purpose; Cicero, who was, I believe, a wiser man than either of them, expressly holds the contrary; and certain it is, there are some incidents in life so very strange and unaccountable, that it seems to require more than human skill and foresight in producing them.

Of this kind was what now happened to Jones, who found Mr. Nightingale the elder in so critical a minute, that Fortune, if she was really worthy all the worship she received at Rome, could not have contrived such another. In short, the old gentleman, and the father of the young lady whom he intended for his son, had been hard at it for many hours; and the latter was just now gone, and had left the former delighted with the thoughts that he had succeeded in a long contention, which had been between the two fathers of the future bride and bridegroom; in which both endeavoured to over-reach the other, and as it not rarely happens in such cases, both had retreated fully satisfied of having obtained the victory.

This gentleman, whom Mr. Jones now visited, was what they call a man of the world; that is to say, a man who directs his conduct in this world, as one who being fully persuaded there is no other, is resolved

resolved to make the most of this. In his early years he had been bred to trade; but having acquired a very good fortune, he had lately declined his business; or, to speak more properly, had changed it from dealing in goods, to dealing only in money, of which he had always a plentiful fund at command, and of which he knew very well how to make a very plentiful advantage, sometimes of the necessities of private men, and sometimes of those of the public. He had indeed conversed so entirely with money, that it may be almost doubted, whether he imagined there was any other thing really existed in the world: this at least may be certainly averred, that he firmly believed nothing else to have any real value.

The reader will, I fancy, allow, that Fortune could not have culled out a more improper person for Mr. Jones to attack with any probability of success; nor could the whimsical lady have directed this attack at a more unseasonable time.

As money then was always uppermost in this gentleman's thoughts, so the moment he saw a stranger within his doors, it immediately occurred to his imagination, that such stranger was either come to bring him money, or to fetch it from him. And according as one or other of these thoughts prevailed, he conceived a favourable or unfavourable idea of the person who approached him.

Unluckily for Jones, the latter of these was the ascendant at present; for as a young gentleman had visited him the day before, with a bill from his son for a play debt, he apprehended, at the first sight of Jones, that he was come on such another errand. Jones therefore had no sooner told him, that he was come on his son's account, than the old gentleman, being confirmed in his suspicion, burst forth into an exclamation, 'That he would lose his labour.' 'Is it then possible, Sir,' answered Jones, 'that you can guess my business?' 'If I do guess it,' replied the other, 'I repeat again to you, you will lose your labour.'

Labour. What, I suppose you are one of those sparks who lead my son into all those scenes of riot and debauchery, which will be his destruction; but I shall pay no more of his bills I promise you. I expect he will quit all such company for the future. If I had imagined otherwise, I should not have provided a wife for him; for I would be instrumental in the ruin of nobody.' 'How, Sir,' said Jones, 'and was this lady of your providing?' 'Pray, Sir,' answered the old gentleman, 'how comes it to be any concern of yours?' — 'Nay, dear Sir,' replied Jones, 'be not offended that I interest myself in what regards your son's happiness, for whom I have so great an honour and value. It was upon that very account I came to wait on you. I can't express the satisfaction you have given me by what you say; for I do assure you your son is a person for whom I have the highest honour.—Nay, Sir, it is not easy to express the esteem I have for you, who could be so generous, so good, so kind, so indulgent to provide such a match for your son; a woman, who, I dare swear, will make him one of the happiest men upon earth.'

There is scarce any thing which so happily introduces men to our good liking, as having conceived some alarm at their first appearance; when once those apprehensions begin to vanish, we soon forget the fears which they occasioned, and look on ourselves as indebted for our present ease, to those very persons who at first raised our fears.

Thus it happened to Nightinale, who no sooner found that Jones had no demand on him, as he suspected, than he began to be pleased with his presence. 'Pray, good Sir,' said he, 'be pleased to sit down. I do not remember to have ever had the pleasure of seeing you before; but if you are a friend of my son, and have anything to say concerning this young lady, I shall be glad to hear you. As to her mak-

ing

‘ing him happy, it will be his own fault if she doth not. I have discharged my duty, in taking care of the main article. She will bring him a fortune capable of making any reasonable, prudent, sober man happy.’—‘Undoubtedly,’ cries Jones, ‘for she is, in herself a fortune; so beautiful, so genteel, so sweet-tempered, and so well educated; she is indeed a most accomplished young lady; sings admirably well, and hath a most delicate hand at the harpsichord.’—‘I did not know any of these matters,’ answered the old gentleman, ‘for I never saw the lady; but I do not like her the worse for what you tell me; and I am the better pleased with her father for not laying any stress on these qualifications in our bargain. I shall always think it a proof of his understanding. A silly fellow would have brought in these articles as an addition to her fortune; but to give him his due, he never mentioned any such matter; though to be sure they are no disparagements to a woman.’—‘I do assure you, Sir,’ cries Jones, ‘she hath them all in the most eminent degree: for my part, I own I was afraid you might have been a little backward, a little less inclined to the match; for your son told me you had never seen the lady; therefore I came, Sir, in that case, to entreat you, to conjure you, as you value the happiness of your son, not to be averse to his match with a woman who hath not only all the good qualities I have mentioned, but many more.’—‘If that was your business, Sir,’ said the old gentleman, ‘we are both obliged to you; and you may be perfectly easy; for I give you my word I was very well satisfied with her fortune.’—‘Sir,’ answered Jones, ‘I honour you every moment more and more. To be so easily satisfied, so very moderate on that account, is a proof of the soundness of your understanding, as well as the nobleness of your mind.’—‘Not so very moderate, young gentleman, not so very moderate,’ answered the father.

‘ Still

' Still more and more noble,' replied Jones, ' and give me leave to add, sensible : for sure it is little less than madness to consider money as the sole foundation of happiness. Such a woman as this, with her little, her nothing of a fortune?—' I find,' cries the old gentleman, ' you have a pretty just opinion of money, my friend, or else you are better acquainted with the person of the lady than with her circumstances. Why pray, what fortune do you imagine this lady to have?'—' What fortune?' cries Jones, ' why too contemptible a one to be named for your son.'—' Well, well, well,' said the other, ' perhaps he might have done better.'—' That I deny,' said Jones, ' for she is one of the best of women.'—' Ay, ay, but in point of fortune I mean'—answered the other.—' And yet as to that now, how much do you imagine your friend is to have?'—' How much,' cries Jones, ' how much! —Why at the utmost, perhaps, 200 l.'—' Do you mean to banter me, young gentleman?' said the father, a little angry.—' No, upon my soul,' answered Jones, ' I am in earnest; nay, I believe I have gone to the utmost farthing. If I do the lady an injury, I ask her pardon.'—' Indeed you do,' cries the father. ' I am certain she hath fifty times that sum, and she shall produce fifty to that, before I consent that she shall marry my son.'—' Nay,' said Jones, ' it is too late to talk of consent now—If she hath not fifty farthings, your son is married.'—' My son married!' answered the old gentleman with surprize. ' Nay,' said Jones, ' I thought you was unacquainted with it.'—' My son married to Miss Harris!' answered he again.—' To Miss Harris?' said Jones; ' no, Sir, to Miss Nancy Miller, the daughter of Mrs. Miller, at whose house he lodged; a young lady, who, though her mother is reduced to let lodgings'—' Are you bantering, or are you in earnest?' cries the father, with a most solemn voice. ' Indeed, Sir,' answered Jones, ' I scorn

the

the character of a banterer; I came to you in most serious earnest, imagining, as I find true, that your son had never dared acquaint you with a match so much inferior to him in point of fortune, though the reputation of the lady will suffer it no longer to remain a secret.'

While the father stood like one struck suddenly dumb at this news, a gentleman came into the room, and saluted him by the name of brother.

But though these two were in consanguinity so nearly related, they were in their dispositions almost the opposites to each other. The brother who now arrived had likewise been bred to trade, in which he no sooner saw himself worth 6000*l.* than he purchased a small estate with the greatest part of it, and retired into the country; where he married the daughter of an unbenedic'd clergyman; a young lady who, though she had neither beauty nor fortune, had recommended herself to his choice, entirely by her good humour, of which she possessed a very large share.

With this woman he had, during twenty-five years, lived a life more resembling the model which certain poets ascribe to the Golden Age, than any of those patterns which are furnished by the present times. By her he had four children, but none of them arrived at maturity except only one daughter, whom in vulgar language he and his wife had spoiled; that is, had educated with the utmost tenderness and fondness; which she returned to such a degree, that she had actually refused a very extraordinary match with a gentleman a little turned of forty, because she could not bring herself to part with her parents. The young lady whom Mr. Nightingale had intended for his son was a near neighbour of his brother, and an acquaintance of his niece; and in reality it was upon the account of this projected match, that he was now come to town; not indeed to forward, but

to dissuade his brother from a purpose which he conceived would inevitably ruin his nephew; for he fore-saw no other event from a union with Miss Harris, notwithstanding the largeness of her fortune; as neither her person nor mind seemed to him to promise any kind of matrimonial felicity; for she was very tall, very thin, very ugly, very affected, very silly, and very ill-natured.

His brother therefore no sooner mentioned the marriage of his nephew with Miss Miller, than he express the utmost satisfaction; and when the father had very bitterly reviled his son, and pronounced sentence of beggary upon him, the uncle began in the following manner :

' If you was a little cooler, brother, I would ask
you whether you love your son for his sake, or for
your own. You would answer, I suppose, and so
I suppose you think, for his sake; and doubtless it
is his happiness which you intended in the marriage
you proposed for him.

' Now, brother, to prescribe rules of happiness to
others, hath always appeared to me very absurd,
and to insist on doing this, very tyrannical. It is
a vulgar error I know; but it is nevertheless an
error. And if this be absurd in other things, it is
mostly so in the affair of marriage; the happiness
of which depends entirely on the affection which
subsists between the parties.

' I have therefore always thought it unreasonable
in parents to desire to chuse for their children on
this occasion; since to force affection is an impos-
sible attempt; nay, so much doth love abhor force,
that I know not whether, through an unfortunate
but incurable perverseness in our natures, it may
not be even impatient of persuasion.

' It is however true, that though a parent will
not, I think, wisely prescribe, he ought to be con-
sulted on this occasion; and in strictness, perhaps,
should

• should at least have a negative voice. My nephew,
• therefore, I own, in marrying without asking your
• advice, hath been guilty of a fault. But honestly
• speaking, brother, have you not a little promoted
• this fault? have not your frequent declarations on
• this subject given him a moral certainty of your
• refusal, where there was any deficiency in point of
• fortune? nay, doth not your present anger arise
• solely from that deficiency? and if he hath failed
• in his duty here, did you not as much exceed that
• authority, when you absolutely bargained with
• him for a woman without his knowlege, whom
• yourself never saw, and whom, if you had seen
• and known as well as I, it must have been madness
• in you to have ever thought of bringing into your
• family?

• Still I own my nephew in a fault; but surely it is
• not an unpardonable fault. He hath acted indeed
• without your consent, in a matter in which he ought
• to have asked it; but it is in a matter in which his
• interest is principally concerned; you yourself must
• and will acknowledge, that you consulted his inter-
• est only; and if he unfortunately differed from you
• and hath been mistaken in his notion of happiness,
• will you, brother, if you love your son, carry him still
• wider from the point? will you increase the ill con-
• sequences of his simple choice? will you endeavour
• to make an event certain misery to him, which may
• accidentally prove so? in a word, brother, because
• he hath put it out of your power to make his cir-
• cumstances as affluent as you would, will you distract
• them as much as you can?

By the force of the true catholick faith, St. Anthony
won upon the fishes. Orpheus and Amphion went
a little farther, and by the charms of music enchanted
things merely inanimate. Wonderful both. But
neither history nor fable have ever yet ventured to re-
cord an instance of any one, who by force of argu-
ment

ment and reason hath triumphed over habitual avarice.

Mr. Nightingale, the father, instead of attempting to answer his brother, contented himself with only observing, that they had always differed in their sentiments concerning the education of their children. ‘I wish,’ said he, ‘brother, you would have confined your care to your own daughter, and never have troubled yourself with my son, who hath, I believe, as little profited by your precepts, as by your example;’ for young Nightingale was his uncle’s godson, and had lived more with him than with his father. So that the uncle had often declared, he loved his nephew almost equally with his own child.

Jones fell into raptures with this good gentleman; and when, after much persuasion, they found the father grew still more and more irritated, instead of appeased, Jones conducted the uncle to his nephew at the house of Mrs. Miller.

C H A P. IX.

Containing strange matters.

AT his return to his lodgings, Jones found the situation of affairs greatly altered from what they had been in at his departure. The mother, the two daughters, and young Mr. Nightingale, were now sat down to supper together, when the uncle was, at his own desire, introduced without any ceremony into the company, to all of whom he was well known; for he had several times visited his nephew at that house.

The old gentleman immediately walked up to Miss Nancy, saluted and wished her joy, as he did afterwards the mother and the other sister; and lastly, he paid the proper compliments to his nephew, with the same good humour and courtesy, as if his nephew had married his equal or superior in fortune, with all the previous requisites first performed,

Miss

Miss Nancy and her supposed husband both turned pale, and looked rather foolish than otherwise on the occasion; but Mis Miller took the first opportunity of withdrawing; and having sent for Jones into the dining room, she threw herself at his feet, and in a most passionate flood of tears, called him her good angel, the preserver of her poor little family, with many other respectful and endearing appellations, and made him every acknowledgment which the highest benefit can extract from the most grateful heart.

After the first gust of her passion was a little over, which she declared, if she had not vented, would have burst her, she proceeded to inform Mr. Jones, that all matters were settled between Mr. Ningtingale and her daughter, and that they were to be married the next morning: at which Mr. Jones having expressed much pleasure, the poor woman fell again into a fit of joy and thanksgiving, which he at length with difficulty silenced, and prevailed on her to return with him back to the company, whom they found in the same good humour in which they had left them.

This little society now past two or three very agreeable hours together, in which the uncle, who was a very great lover of his bottle, had so well ply'd his nephew, that this latter, though not drunk, began to be somewhat flustered; and now Mr. Nightingale taking the old gentleman with him up stairs into the apartment he had lately occupied, unbosomed himself as follows:

' As you have been always the best and kindest of uncles to me, and as you have shewn such unparalleled goodness in forgiving this match, which to be sure may be thought a little improvident; I should never forgive myself if I attempted to deceive you in any thing.' He then confessed the truth, and opened the whole affair.

' How, Jack !' said the old gentleman, ' and are you really then not married to this young woman ?' ' no, upon my honour,' answered Nightingale, ' I have

' have told you the simple truth.' My dear boy,' cries the uncle kissing him, ' I am heartily glad to hear it. I never was better pleased in my life. If you had been married, I should have assisted you as much as was in my power, to have made the best of a bad matter; but there is a great difference between considering a thing which is already done and irrecoverable, and that which is yet to do. Let your reason have fair play, Jack, and you will see this match in so foolish and preposterous a light, that there will be no need of any dissuasive arguments.' ' How, Sir !' replies young Nightingale, ' is there this difference between having already done an act, and being in honour engaged to do it ?' ' Pugh,' said the uncle, ' honour is a creature of the world's making, and the world hath the power of a creator over it, and may govern and direct it as they please. Now you well know how trivial these breaches of contract are thought; even the grossest make but the wonder and conversation of a day. Is there a man who will be afterwards more backward in giving you his sister or daughter, or is there any sister or daughter who would be more backward to receive you? honour is not concerned in these engagements.' ' Pardon me, dear Sir,' cries Nightingale, ' I can never think so; and not only honour, but conscience and humanity are concerned. I am well satisfied, that was I now to disappoint the young creature, her death would be the consequence, and I should look on myself as her murderer; nay, as her murderer by the cruellest of all methods, by breaking her heart.' ' Break her heart, indeed! No, no, Jack,' cries the uncle, ' the hearts of women are not so soon broke; they are tough, boy; they are tough.' But, Sir,' answered Nightingale, ' my own affections are engaged, and I never could be happy with any other woman. How often have I heard you say, that children should be always suffered to chuse for themselves; and that you would let my

'cousin Harriet do so!' Why ay,' replied the old gentleman, 'so I would have them; but then I would have them chuse wisely.—Indeed, Jack, you must and shall leave this girl.'—'Indeed, uncle,' cries the other, 'I must and will have her.' 'You will, young gentleman?' said the uncle; 'I did not expect such a word from you. I should not wonder if you had used such language to your father, who hath always treated you like a dog, and kept you at the distance which a tyrant preserves over his subjects; but I, who have lived with you upon an equal footing, might surely expect better usage: but I know how to account for it all! It is owing to your preposterous education, in which I have had too little share. There is my daughter now whom I have brought up as my friend, never doth any thing without my advice, nor ever refuses to take it when I give it her.' 'You have never yet given her advice in an affair of this kind,' said Nightingale, 'for I am greatly mistaken in my cousin, if she would be very ready to obey even your most positive commands in abandoning her inclinations.' 'Don't abuse my girl,' answered the old gentleman with some emotion; 'don't abuse my Harriet. I have brought her up to have no inclinations contrary to my own. By suffering her to do whatever she pleases, I have enured her to a habit of being pleased to do whatever I like.' Pardon me, Sir,' said Nightingale, 'I have not the least design to reflect on my cousin, for whom I have the greatest esteem; and indeed I am convinced you will never put her to so severe a trial, or lay such hard commands on her, as you would do on me.—But, dear Sir, let us return to the company; for they will begin to be uneasy at our long absence. I must beg one favour of my dear uncle, which is, that he would not say any thing to shock the poor girl or her mother.' 'O you need not fear me,' answer'd he, 'I understand myself too well to affront women; so I will readily grant

' grant you that favour; and in return I must expect another of you.' ' There are but few of your commands, Sir,' said Nightingale, which I shall not very cheerfully obey.' ' Nay, Sir, I ask nothing,' said the uncle, ' but the honour of your company home to my lodging, that I may reason the case a little more fully with you: for I would, if possible, have the satisfaction of preserving my family, notwithstanding the headstrong folly of my brother, who, in his own opinion, is the wisest man in the whole world.'

Nightingale, who well knew his uncle to be as headstrong as his father, submitted to attend him home, and then they both returned back into the room, where the old gentleman promised to carry himself with the same decorum which he had before maintained.

C H A P. X.

A short chapter, which concludes the book.

THE long absence of the uncle and nephew had occasioned some disquiet in the minds of all whom they had left behind them; and the more, as during the preceding dialogue, the uncle had more than once elevated his voice, so as to be heard downstairs; which, tho' they could not distinguish what he said, had caused some evil foreboding in Nancy, and her mother, and even in Jones himself.

When the good company therefore again assembled, there was a visible alteration in all their faces; and the good humour which, at their last meeting, universally shone forth in every countenance, was now changed into a much less agreeable aspect. It was a change indeed common enough to the weather in this climate, from sunshine to clouds, from June to December.

This alteration was not however greatly remarked by any present; for as they were all now endeavouring to conceal their own thoughts, and to act a part, they

became all too busily engaged in the scene to be spectators of it. Thus neither the uncle nor nephew saw any symptoms of suspicion in the mother or daughter, nor did the mother or daughter remark the overacted complaisance of the old man, nor the counterfeit satisfaction which grinned in the features of the young one.

Something like this, I believe, frequently happens, where the whole attention of two friends being engaged in the part which each is to act, in order to impose on the other, neither sees nor suspects the art practised against himself; and thus the thrust of both (to borrow no improper metaphor on the occasion) alike takes place.

From the same reason it is no unusual thing for both parties to be over-reached in a bargain, though the one must be always the greater loser; as was he who sold a blind horse, and received a bad note in payment.

Our company in about half an hour broke up, and the uncle carried off his nephew; but not before the latter had assured Miss Nancy, in a whisper, that he would attend her early in the morning, and fulfil all his engagements.

Jones, who was the least concerned in this scene, saw the most. He did indeed suspect the very fact; for besides observing the great alteration in the behaviour of the uncle, the distance he assumed, and his overstrained civility to Miss Nancy; the carrying off a bridegroom from his bride at that time of night, was so extraordinary a proceeding, that it could be only accounted for, by imagining that young Nightingale had revealed the whole truth, which the apparent openness of his temper, and his being flustered with liquor, made too probable.

While he was reasoning with himself, whether he should acquaint these poor people with his suspicion, the maid of the house informed him, that a gentlewoman desired to speak with him.—He went immediately

ately out, and taking the candle from the maid, ushered his visitant up stairs, who in the person of Mrs. Honour, acquainted him with such dreadful news concerning his Sophia, that he immediately lost all consideration for every other person; and his whole stock of compassion was entirely swallowed up in reflections on his own misery, and on that of his unfortunate angel.

What this dreadful matter was, the reader will be informed, after we have first related the many preceding steps which produced it, and those will be the subject of the following book.

BOOK XV.

In which the history advances about two days.

C H A P. I.

Too short to need a preface.

HERE are a set of religious, or rather moral writers, who teach that virtue is the certain road to happiness, and vice to misery, in this world. A very wholesome and comfortable doctrine, and to which we have but one objection, namely, that it is not true.

Indeed, if by virtue these writers mean the exercise of those cardinal virtues, which like good housewives stay at home, and mind only the business of their own family, I shall very readily concede the point: for so surely do all these contribute and lead to happiness, that I could almost wish, in violation of all the ancient and modern sages, to call them rather by the name of wisdom, than by that of virtue: for with regard to this life, no system, I conceive, was ever wiser than that of the ancient epicureans, who held this wisdom to constitute the chief

good; nor foolisher than that of their opposites, those modern epicures, who place all felicity in the abundant gratification of every sensual appetite.

But if by virtue is meant (as I almost think it ought) a certain relative quality, which is always busying itself without doors, and seems as much interested in pursuing the good of others as its own; I cannot so easily agree that this is the surest way to human happiness; because I am afraid we must then include poverty and contempt, with all the mischiefs which backbiting, envy, and ingratitude, can bring on mankind, in our idea of happiness; nay, sometimes perhaps we shall be obliged to wait upon the said happiness to a gaol; since many, by the above virtue, have brought themselves thither.

I have not now leisure to enter upon so large a field of speculation as here seems opening upon me; my design was to wipe off a doctrine that lay in my way; since while Mr. Jones was acting the most virtuous part imaginable, in labouring to preserve his fellow-creatures from destruction, the devil, or some other evil spirit, one perhaps clothed in human flesh, was hard at work to make him completely miserable in the ruin of his Sophia.

This therefore would seem an exception to the above rule, if indeed it was a rule; but as we have in our voyage through life seen so many other exceptions to it, we chuse to dispute the doctrine on which it is founded, which we don't apprehend to be christian, which we are convinced is not true, and which is indeed destructive of one of the noblest arguments that reason alone can furnish for the belief of immortality.

But as the reader's curiosity (if he hath any) must be now awake, and hungry, we shall provide to feed it as fast as we can.

C H A P. II.

In which is opened a very black design against Sophia.

I Remember a wise old gentleman, who used to say, ‘ When children are doing nothing, they are doing mischief.’ I will not enlarge this quaint saying to the most beautiful part of the creation in general; but so far I may be allowed, that when the effects of female jealousy do not appear openly in their proper colours of rage and fury, we may suspect that mischievous passion to be at work privately, and attempting to undermine what it doth not attack above ground.

This was exemplified in the conduct of lady Belaston, who, under all the smiles which she wore in her countenance, concealed much indignation against Sophia; and as she plainly saw that this young lady stood between her and the full indulgence of her desires, she resolved to get rid of her by some means or other; nor was it long before a very favourable opportunity of accomplishing this presented itself to her.

The reader may be pleased to remember, that when Sophia was thrown into that consternation at the play-house, by the wit and humour of a set of young gentlemen who call themselves the Town, we informed him, that she had put herself under the protection of a young nobleman, who had very safely conducted her to her chair.

This nobleman, who frequently visited lady Belaston, had more than once seen Sophia there, since her arrival in town, and had conceived a very great liking to her; which liking, as beauty never looks more amiable than in distress, Sophia had in this fright so increased, that he might now, without any great impropriety, be said to be actually in love with her.

It may easily be believed, that he would not suffer so handsome an occasion of improving his acquaintance

tance with the beloved object as now offered itself, to elapse, when even good breeding alone might have prompted him to pay her a visit.

The next morning, therefore, after this accident, he waited on Sophia, with the usual compliments, and hopes that she had received no harm from her last night's adventure.

As love, like fire, when once thoroughly kindled, is soon blown into a flame; Sophia in a very short time completed her conquest. Time now flew away unperceived, and the noble lord had been two hours in company with the lady, before it entered into his head that he had made too long a visit. Though this circumstance alone would have alarmed Sophia, who was somewhat more a mistress of computation at present; she had indeed much more pregnant evidence from the eyes of her lover of what passed within his bosom; nay, though he did not make any open declaration of his passion, yet many of his expressions were rather too warm, and too tender, to have been imputed to complaisance, even in the age when such complaisance was in fashion; the very reverse of which is well known to be the reigning mode at present.

Lady Bellaston had been apprised of his lordship's visit at his first arrival; and the length of it very well satisfied her, that things went as she wished, and as indeed she had suspected the second time she saw this young couple together. This business she rightly, I think, concluded, that she should by no means forward by mixing in the company while they were together; she therefore ordered her servants, that when my lord was going, they should tell him, she desired to speak with him; and employed the intermediate time in meditating how best to accomplish a scheme which she made no doubt but his lordship would very readily embrace the execution of.

Lord Fellamar (for that was the title of this young nobleman) was no sooner introduced to her ladyship, than

than she attacked him in the following strain : ‘ Bless me ! my lord, are you here yet ? I thought my servants had made a mistake, and let you go away : and I wanted to see you about an affair of some importance.’—‘ Indeed, lady Bellaston,’ said he, ‘ I don’t wonder you are astonished at the length of my visit : for I have staid above two hours, and I did not think I had staid above half a one.’—‘ What am I to conclude from thence, my lord?’ said she. ‘ The company must be very agreeable which can make time slide away so very deceitfully.’—‘ Upon my honour,’ said he, ‘ the most agreeable I ever saw. Pray tell me, lady Bellaston, who is this blazing star which you have produced among us all of a sudden ?’—‘ What blazing star, my lord ?’ said she, affecting a surprize. ‘ I mean,’ said he, ‘ the lady I saw here the other day, whom I had last night in my arms at the play-house, and to whom I have been making that unreasonable visit.’—‘ O my cousin Western !’ said she ; ‘ why that blazing star, my lord, is the daughter of a country booby Squire, and hath been in town about a fortnight, for the first time.’—‘ Upon my soul,’ said he, ‘ I should swear she had been bred in a court ; for besides her beauty, I never saw any thing so genteel, so sensible, so polite.’—‘ O brave !’ cries the lady, ‘ my cousin hath you, I find.’—‘ Upon my honour,’ answered he, ‘ I wish she had : for I am in love with her to distraction.’—‘ Nay, my lord,’ said she, ‘ it is not wishing yourself very ill neither, for she is a very great fortune : I assure you, she is an only child, and her father’s estate is a good 3000l. a year.’—‘ Then I can assure you, Madam,’ answered the lord, ‘ I think her the best match in England.’—‘ Indeed, my lord,’ replied she, ‘ if you like her, I heartily wish you had her.’—‘ If you think so kindly of me, Madam,’ said he, ‘ as she is a relation of yours, will you do me the honour to propose it to B. 5. her

' her father?' And are you really then in earnest?' cries the lady with an affected gravity. ' I hope, ' Madam,' answered he, ' you have a better opinion ' of me, than to imagine I would jest with your ' ladyship in an affair of this kind.' ' Indeed then,' said the lady, ' I will most readily propose your ' lordship to her father; and I can, I believe, assure ' you of his joyful acceptance of the proposal; but ' there is a bar, which I am almost ashamed to men- ' tion; and yet it is one you will never be able to ' conquer. You have a rival, my lord, and a rival, ' who, though I blush to name him, neither you ' nor all the world will ever be able to conquer.' ' Upon my word, lady Bellaston,' cries he, ' you ' have struck a damp to my heart, which hath almost ' deprived me of being.' ' Fie! my lord,' said she, ' I should rather hope I had struck fire into you. A ' lover, and talk of damps in your heart! I rather ' imagined you would have asked your rival's name, ' that you might have immediately entered the lists ' with him.' ' I promise you, Madam,' answered he, ' there are very few things I would not under- ' take for your charming cousin: but pray, who is ' this happy man?'—' Why he is,' said she, ' what ' I am sorry to say most happy men with us are, one ' of the lowest fellows in the world. He is a beg- ' gar, a bastard, a foundling, a fellow in meaner ' circumstances than one of your lordship's footmen.' ' And is it possible,' cried he, ' that a young crea- ' ture with such perfections, should think of bestow- ' ing herself so unworthily?' ' Alas! my lord,' answered she, ' consider the country—the bane of ' all young women is the country. There they learn ' a set of romantic notions of love, and I know not ' what folly, which this town and good company can ' scarce eradicate in a whole winter.' ' Indeed, ' Madam,' replied my lord, ' your cousin is of too ' immense a value to be thrown away: such ruin as ' this must be prevented.' ' Alas!' cries she, ' my ' lord

‘ lord, how can it be prevented? The family have already done all in their power; but the girl is, I think, intoxicated, and nothing less than ruin will content her. And to deal more openly with you, I expect every day to hear she is run away with him.’ ‘ What you tell me, lady Bellaston,’ answered his lordship, ‘ affects me most tenderly, and only raises my compassion instead of lessening my adoration of your cousin. Some means must be found to preserve so inestimable a jewel. Hath your ladyship endeavoured to reason with her?’ Here the lady affected a laugh, and cried, ‘ My dear lord, sure you know us better than to talk of reasoning a young woman out of her inclinations? These inestimable jewels are as deaf as the jewels they wear: time, my lord, time is the only medicine to cure their folly; but this is a medicine, which I am certain she will not take; nay, I live in hourly horrors on her account. In short nothing but violent methods will do.’ ‘ What is to be done?’ cries my lord, ‘ what methods are to be taken?—Is there any method upon earth?—Oh! lady Bellaston! there is nothing which I would not undertake for such a reward.’—‘ I really know not,’ answered the lady, after a pause; and then pausing again, she cried out,—‘ Upon my soul, I am at my wit’s end, on this girl’s account.—If she can be preserved, something must be done immediately; and, as I say, nothing but violent methods will do.—If your lordship hath really this attachment to my cousin (and to do her justice, except in this silly inclination, of which she will soon see her folly, she is every way deserving). I think there may be one way, indeed it is a very disagreeable one, and what I am almost afraid to think of.—It requires great spirit, I promise you.’ ‘ I am not conscious, Madam,’ said he, ‘ of any defect there; nor am I, I hope, suspected of any such. It must be an egregious defect indeed, which could make me back-

"ward on this occasion. Nay, my lord," answered she, "I am far from doubting you. I am much more inclined to doubt my own courage; for I must run a monstrous risque. In short, I must place such a confidence in your honour, as a wise woman will scarce ever place in a man on any consideration." In this point likewise my lord very well satisfied her; for his reputation was extremely clear, and common fame did him no more than justice, in speaking well of him. "Well then," said she, "my lord—I—I vow, I can't bear the apprehension of it.—No, it must not be.—At least every other method shall be tried. Can you get rid of your engagements, and dine here to-day? Your lordship will have an opportunity of seeing a little more of Miss Western.—I promise you we have no time to lose. Here will be nobody but lady Betty, and Miss Eagle, and colonel Hamstead, and Tom Edwards; they will all go soon, and I shall be at home to nobody. Then your lordship may be a little more explicit. Nay, I will contrive some method to convince you of her attachment to this fellow." My lord made proper compliments, accepted the invitation, and then they parted to dress, it being now past three in the morning, or to reckon by the old style, in the afternoon.

C H A P. III.

A further explanation of the foregoing design.

THOUGH the reader may have long since concluded lady Bellaston to be a member (and no inconsiderable one) of the great world, she was in reality a very considerable member of the 'little world,' by which appellation was distinguished a very worthy and honourable society which not long since flourished in this kingdom.

Among other good principles upon which this society was founded, there was one very remarkable: for

for as it was a rule of an honourable club of heroes, who assembled at the close of the late war, that all the members should every day fight once at least; so 'twas in this, that every member should, within the twenty-four hours, tell at least one merry fib, which was to be propagated by all the brethren and sisterhood.

Many idle stories were told about this society, which from a certain quality may be, perhaps not unjustly, supposed to have come from the society themselves. As, that the devil was the president; and that he sat in person in an elbow-chair at the upper end of the table: but upon very strict enquiry, I find there is not the least truth in any of those tales; and that the assembly consisted in reality of a set of very good sort of people, and the fibs which they propagated were of a harmless kind, and tended only to produce mirth and good humour.

Edwards was likewise a member of this comical society. To him therefore lady Bellaston applied as a proper instrument for her purpose, and furnished him with a fib, which he was to vent whenever the lady gave him her cue; and this was not to be till the evening, when all the company but lord Fellamar and himself were gone, and while they were engaged in a rubbers at whist.

To this time then, which was between seven and eight in the evening, we will convey our reader; when lady Bellaston, lord Fellamar, Miss Western, and Tom, being engaged at whist, and in the last game of their rubbers, Tom received his cue from lady Bellaston, which was, 'I protest, Tom, you are grown intolerable lately; you used to tell us all the news of the town, and now you know no more of the world than if you lived out of it.'

Mr. Edwards then began as follows: 'the fault is not mine, madam; it lies in the dullness of the age, that doth nothing worth talking of.—O la! though now I think on't, there hath a terrible accident

dent befallen poor colonel Wilcox.—Poor Ned!—
‘ You know him, my lord, every body knows him;
faith I am very much concerned for him.’

‘ What is it, pray?’ says lady Bellaston.

‘ Why, he hath killed a man this morning in a duel,
that’s all.’

His lordship, who was not in the secret, asked
gravely, whom he had killed? To which Edwards
answered, ‘ A young fellow we none of us know; a
Somersetshire lad just come to town, one Jones his
name is; a near relation to one Mr. Allworthy, of
whom your lordship I believe hath heard. I saw
the lad lie dead in a coffee-house—Upon my soul
he is one of the finest corpses I ever saw in my
life.’

Sophia, who just began to deal as Tom had men-
tioned that a man was killed, stopt her hand, and lis-
tened with attention (for all stories of that kind af-
fected her) but no sooner had he arrived at the latter
part of the story, than she began to deal again; and
having dealt three cards to one, and seven to another,
and ten to a third, at last dropt the rest from her hand,
and fell back in her chair.

The company behaved as usually on these occa-
sions. The usual disturbance ensued, the usual assist-
ance was summoned, and Sophia at last, as it is usual,
returned again to life, and was soon after, at her ear-
nest desire, led to her own apartment; where, at my
lord’s request, lady Bellaston acquainted her with the
truth, attempted to carry it off as a jest of her own,
and comforted her with repeated assurances, that
neither his lordship, nor Tom, though she had
taught him the story, were in the true secret of the
affair.

There was no farther evidence necessary to con-
vince lord Fellamar how justly the case had been re-
presented to him by lady Bellaston; and now at her
return into the room, a scheme was laid between these
two noble persons, which, though it appeared in no

very

very heinous light to his lordship (as he faithfully promised, and faithfully resolved too, to make the lady all the subsequent amends in his power by marriage;) yet many of our readers, we doubt not, will see with just detestation.

The next evening at seven was appointed for the fatal purpose, when lady Bellaston undertook that Sophia should be alone, and his lordship should be introduced to her. The whole family were to be regulated for the purpose, most of the servants dispatched out of the house; and for Mrs. Honour, who, to prevent suspicion, was to be left with her mistress till his lordship's arrival, lady Bellaston herself was to engage her in an apartment as distant as possible from the scene of the intended mischief, and out of the hearing of Sophia.

Matters being thus agreed on, his lordship took his leave, and her ladyship retired to rest, highly pleased with a project, of which she had no reason to doubt the success, and which promised so effectually to remove Sophia from being any future obstruction to her amour with Jones, by a means of which she should never appear to be guilty, even if the fact appeared to the world; but this she made no doubt of preventing by huddling up a marriage, to which she thought the ravished Sophia would easily be brought to consent, and at which all the rest of her family would rejoice.

But affairs were not in so quiet a situation in the bosom of the other conspirator: his mind was toss'd in all the distracting anxiety so nobly described by Shakespeare;

Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream:
The genius and the mortal instruments
Are then in council; and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.—

Though

Though the violence of his passion had made him eagerly embrace the first hint of this design, especially as it came from a relation of the lady, yet when that friend to reflection, a pillow, had placed the action itself in all its natural black colours before his eyes, with all the consequences which must, and those which might probably attend it; his resolution began to abate, or rather indeed to go over to the other side; and after a long conflict, which lasted a whole night between honour and appetite, the former at length prevailed, and he determined to wait on lady Bellaston, and to relinquish the design.

Lady Bellaston was in bed, though very late in the morning, and Sophia sitting by her bedside, when the servant acquainted her that lord Fellamar was below in the parlour; upon which her ladyship desired him to stay, and that she would see him presently; but the servant was no sooner departed than poor Sophia began to intreat her cousin not to encourage the visits of that odious lord (so she called him, though a little unjustly) upon her account. ‘ I see his design,’ said she; ‘ for he made downright love to me yesterday morning; but as I am resolved never to admit it, I beg your ladyship not to leave us alone together any more, and to order the servants that, if he enquires for me, I may be always denied to him.’

‘ La ! child,’ says lady Bellaston, ‘ you country girls have nothing but sweethearts in your heads; you fancy every man who is civil to you is making love. He is one of the most gallant young fellows about town, and I am convinced means no more than a little gallantry. Make love to you indeed ! I wish with all my heart he would, and you must be an arrant mad woman to refuse him.’

‘ But as I shall certainly be that mad woman,’ cries Sophia, ‘ I hope his visits will not be intruded upon me.’

‘ O child,’ said lady Bellaston, ‘ you need not be

' so fearful ; if you resolve to run away with that Jones, I know no person who can hinder you.'

' Upon my honour, Madam,' cries Sophia, ' your ladyship injures me. I will never run away with any man ; nor will I ever marry contrary to my father's inclinations.'

' Well, Miss Western,' said the lady, ' if you are not in a humour to see company this morning, you may retire to your own apartment ; for I am not frightened at his lordship, and must send for him up into my dressing room.'

Sophia thanked her ladyship, and withdrew ; and presently afterwards Fellamar was admitted up stairs.

C H A P. IV.

By which it will appear how dangerous an advocate a lady is, when she applies her eloquence to an ill purpose.

WHEN lady Bellaston heard the young lord's scruples, she treated them with the same disdain with which one of those sages of the law, called Newgate Solicitors, treats the qualms of conscience in a young witness. ' My dear lord,' said she, ' you certainly want a cordial. I must send to lady Edgely for one of her best drams. Fie upon it ! have more resolution. Are you frightened by the word *rape* ? or are you apprehensive ? — Well ! if the story of Helen was modern, I should think it unnatural. I mean the behaviour of Paris, not the fondness of the lady ; for all women love a man of spirit. There is another story of the Sabine ladies,—and that too, I thank heaven, is very ancient. Your lordship, perhaps, will admire my reading ; but I think Mr. Hook tells us, they made tolerable good wives afterwards. I fancy few of my married acquaintance were ravished by their husbands.' — ' Nay, dear lady Bellaston,' cried he, ' don't ridicule me in this manner.' — ' Why, my good lord,' answered she, ' do you think any woman

' man in England would not laugh at you in her heart, whatever prudery she might wear in her countenance?—You force me to use a strange kind of language, and to betray my sex most abominably: but I am contented with knowing my intentions are good, and that I am endeavouring to serve my cousin; for I think you will make her a husband notwithstanding this; or, upon my soul, I would not even persuade her to fling herself away upon an empty title. She should not upbraid me hereafter with having lost a man of spirit; for that his enemies allow this poor young fellow to be.'

Let those who have had the satisfaction of hearing reflections of this kind from a wife or a mistress, declare whether they are at all sweetened by coming from a female tongue. Certain it is, they sunk deeper into his lordship than any thing which Demosthenes or Cicero could have said on the occasion.

Lady Bellaston, perceiving she had fired the young lord's pride, began now, like a true orator, to rouse other passions to its assistance. ' My lord,' says she, in a graver voice, ' you will be pleased to remember, you mentioned this matter to me first; for I would not appear to you in the light of one who is endeavouring to put off my cousin upon you. Fourscore thousand pounds do not stand in need of an advocate to recommend them.'—' Nor doth Miss Western,' said he, ' require any recommendation from her fortune; for in my opinion, no woman ever had half her charms.'—' Yes, yes, my lord,' replied the lady, looking in the glass, ' there have been women with more than half her charms, I assure you: not that I need lessen her on that account: she is a most delicious girl, that's certain; and within these few hours she will be in the arms of one, who surely doth not deserve her, though I will give him his due, I believe he is truly a man of spirit.'

' I hope so, Madam,' said my lord; ' though I must own he doth not deserve her; for unless

' heaven,

'heaven, or your ladyship disappoint me, she shall
'within that time be in mine.'

'Well spoken, my lord,' answered the lady, 'I
promise you no disappointment shall happen from
my side; and within this week I am convinced I
shall call your lordship my cousin in public.'

The remainder of this scene consisted entirely of raptures, excuses, and compliments, very pleasant to have heard from the parties; but rather dull when related at second hand. Here, therefore, we shall put an end to this dialogue, and hasten to the fatal hour, when every thing was prepared for the destruction of poor Sophia.

But this being the most tragical matter in our whole history, we shall treat it in a chapter by itself.

C H A P. V.

*Containing some matters which may affect, and others
which may surprize the reader.*

THE clock had now struck seven, and poor Sophia, alone and melancholy, sat reading a tragedy. It was The Fatal Marriage; and she was now come to that part where the poor distressed Isabella disposes of her wedding ring.

Here the book dropt from her hand, and a shower of tears ran down into her bosom. In this situation she had continued a minute, when the door opened, and in came lord Fellamar. Sophia started from her chair at his entrance; and his lordship advancing forwards, and making a low blow, said, 'I am afraid,
'Miss Western, I break in upon you abruptly.'—
'Indeed, my lord,' says she, 'I must own myself a
little surprized at this unexpected visit.'—'If this
visit be unexpected, Madam,' answered lord Fellamar, 'my eyes must have been very faithleſs inter-
preters of my heart, when last I had the honour of
seeing you; for surely you could not otherwise have
hoped

' hoped to detain my heart in your possession, without receiving a visit from its owner.' Sophia, confused as she was, answered this bombast (and very properly, I think) with a look of inconceivable disdain. My lord then made another and a longer speech of the same sort. Upon which Sophia, trembling, said
' Am I really to conceive your lordship to be out
' of your senses? sure, my lord, there is no other
' excuse for such behaviour.'—' I am, indeed, Ma-
dam, in the situation you suppose,' cries his lord-
ship; ' and sure you will pardon the effects of a
' frenzy which you yourself have occasioned: for
' love hath so totally deprived me of reason, that I
' am scarce accountable for any of my actions.'—
' Upon my word, my lord,' said Sophia, ' I neither
' understand your words nor your behaviour.'—
' Suffer me then, Madam,' cries he, ' at your feet to
' explain both, by laying open my soul to you, and
' declaring that I doat on you to the highest degree of
' distraction. O most adorable, most divine creature!
' what language can express the sentiments of my
' heart?'—' I do assure you, my lord,' said Sophia,
' I shall not stay to hear any more of this.'—' Do not,'
cries he, ' think of leaving me thus cruelly: could
' you know half the torments which I feel, that
' tender bosom must pity what those eyes have
' caused.' Then fetching a deep sigh, and laying
hold of her hand, he ran on for some minutes in a
strain which would be little more pleasing to the
reader than it was to the lady; and at last concluded
with a declaration, ' That if he was master of
' the world, he would lay it at her feet.' Sophia
then forcibly pulling away her hand from his, answer-
ed with much spirit, ' I promise you, Sir, your
' world and its master, I should spurn from me with
' equal contempt.' She then offered to go, and lord
Fellamar again laying hold of her hand, said, ' Par-
' don me, my beloved angel, freedoms which no-
' thing but despair could have tempted me to take.

—Believe

—Believe me, could I have had any hope that my title and fortune, neither of them inconsiderable, unless when compared with your worth, would have been accepted, I had, in the humblest manner, presented them to your acceptance.—But I cannot lose you.—By heaven I will sooner part with my soul.—You are, you must, you shall be only mine.'—' My lord,' said she, ' I intreat you to desist from a vain pursuit; for, upon my honour, I will never hear you on this subject. Let go my hand, my lord; for I am resolved to go from you this moment; nor will I ever see you more.'—' Then, Madam,' cries his lordship, ' I must make the best use of this moment; for, I cannot, nor will not live without you.'—' What do you mean, my lord?' said Sophia; ' I will raise the family.'—' I have no fear, Madam,' answered he, ' but of losing you, and that I am resolved to prevent; the only way which despair points to me.'—He then caught her in his arms: upon which she screamed so loud, that she must have alarmed some one to her assistance, had not lady Bellaston taken care to remove all ears.

But a more lucky circumstance happened for poor Sophia: another noise now broke forth, which almost drowned her cries; for now the whole house rung with, ' Where is she? d—n me, I'll unkennel her this instant. Shew me her chamber, I say. Where is my daughter? I know she's in the house, and I'll see her if she's above ground. Shew me where she is.' At which last words the door flew open, and in came Squire Western, with his parson, and a set of myrmidons at his heels.

How miserable must have been the condition of poor Sophia, when the enraged voice of her father was welcome to her ears? welcome indeed it was, and luckily did he come; for it was the only accident upon earth which could have preserved the peace of her mind from being for ever destroyed.

Sophia

Sophia, notwithstanding her fright, presently knew her father's voice; and his lordship, notwithstanding his passion, knew the voice of reason, which peremptorily assured him, it was not now a time for the perpetration of his villainy. Hearing, therefore, the voice approach, and hearing likewise whose it was (for as the Squire more than once roared forth the woful daughter, so Sophia, in the midst of her struggling, cried out upon her father), he thought proper to relinquish his prey, having only disordered her handkerchief, and with his rude lips committed violence on her lovely neck.

If the reader's imagination dōth not assist me, I shall never be able to describe the situation of these two persons when Western came into the room. Sophia tottered into a chair, where she sat disordered, pale, breathless, bursting with indignation at lord Fellinar; affrighted, and yet more rejoiced at the arrival of her father.

His lordship sat down near her, with the bag of his wig hanging over one of his shoulders, the rest of his dress being somewhat disordered, and rather a greater proportion of linen than is usual appearing at his bottom. As to the rest, he was amazed, affrighted, vexed, and ashamed.

As to Squire Western, he happened, at this time, to be overtaken by an enemy, which very frequently pursues, and seldom fails to overtake, most of the country gentlemen in this kingdom. He was, literally speaking, drunk: which circumstance, together with his natural impetuosity, could produce no other effect, than his running immediately up to his daughter, upon whom he fell foul with his tongue in the most inveterate manner; nay, he had probably committed violence with his hands, had not the parson interposed, saying, 'for heaven's sake, Sir, animad-
vert that you are in the house of a great lady. Let
me beg you to mitigate your wrath; it should mi-
nister a fullness of satisfaction that you have found
you.'

‘ your daughter; for as to revenge, it belongeth not unto us. I discern great contrition in the countenance of the young lady. I stand assured, if you will forgive her, she will repent her of all past offences, and return unto her duty.’

The strength of the parson’s arms had at first been of more service than the strength of his rhetoric. However, his last words wrought some effect, and the Squire answered, ‘ I’ll forgee her if she wull ha un. If wot ha un, Sophy, I’ll forgee thee all. Why dost unt speak? Shat ha un? D—n me, that ha un? Why dost unt answer? Was ever such a stubborn tuoad?’

‘ Let me intreat you, Sir, to be a little more moderate,’ said the parson; ‘ you frighten the young lady so, that you deprive her of all power of utterance.’

‘ Power of mine a—,’ answered the Squire. ‘ You take her part then, you do? A pretty parson truly, to side with an undutiful child. ‘ Yes, yes, I will gee you a living with a pox, I’ll gee un to the devil sooner.’

‘ I humbly crave your pardon,’ said the parson; ‘ I assure your worship I meant no such matter.’

My lady Bellaston now entered the room, and came up to the Squire, who no sooner saw her, than resolving to follow the instructions of his sister, he made her a very civil bow, in the rural manner, and paid her some of his best compliments. He then immediately proceeded to his complaints, and said, ‘ there, my lady cousin; there stands the most undutiful child in the world: she hankers after a beggarly rascal, and won’t marry one of the greatest matches in all England, that we have provided for her.’

‘ Indeed, cousin Western,’ answered the lady, ‘ I am persuaded you wrong my cousin. I am sure she hath a better understanding. I am convinced she will not refuse what she must be sensible is so much to her advantage.’

This.

This was a wilful mistake in lady Bellaston; for she well knew whom Mr. Western meant; though perhaps she thought he would easily be reconciled to his lordship's proposals.

' Do you hear there,' quoth the Squire, ' what her ladyship says? All your family are for the match. ' Come, Sophy, be a good girl, and be dutiful, and make your father happy.'

' If my death will you happy, Sir,' answered Sophia, ' you will shortly be so.'

' It's a lie, Sophy; it's a d—n'd lie, and you know it,' said the Squire.

' Indeed, Miss Western,' said Lady Bellaston, ' you injure your father; he hath nothing in view but your interest in this match; and I and all your friends must acknowledge the highest honour done to your family in the proposal.'

' Ay, all of us,' quoth the Squire: ' Nay, it was no proposal of mine. She knows it was her aunt proposed it to me first.—Come, Sophy, once more let me beg you to be a good girl, and gee me your consent before your cousin.'

' Let me give him your hand, cousin,' said the lady. ' It is the fashion now a-days to dispense with time and long courtships.'

' Pugh,' said the Squire, what signifies time; ' wo'n't they have time enough to court afterwards? People may court very well after they have been a bed together.'

As lord Fellamar was very well assured that he was meant by Lady Bellaston, so never having heard nor suspected a word of Blifil, he made no doubt of his being meant by the father. Coming up therefore to the Squire, he said, ' Though I have not the honour, Sir, of being personally known to you; yet, as I find I have the happiness to have my proposals accepted, let me intercede, Sir, in behalf of the young lady, that she not be more solicited at this time.'

You,

* You intercede, Sir !' said the Squire, ' why, who
* the devil are you ?'

' Sir, I am Lord Fellamar,' answered he, ' and
* am the happy man, whom I hope you have done
* the honour of accepting for a son-in-law.'

' You are a son of a b—,' replied the Squire, ' for
* all your laced coat. You my son-in-law, and be
* d—n'd to you !'

' I shall take more from you, Sir, than from any
* man,' answered the lord; ' but I must inform you,
* that I am not used to hear such language without
* resentment.'

' Resent my a—,' quoth the Squire. ' Don't think
* I am afraid of such a fellow as thee art ! Because
* haft a got a spit there dangling at thy side. Lay by
* your spit, and I'll give thee enough of meddling
* with what doth not belong to thee.—I'll teach you
* to father-in-law me ! I'll lick thy jacket.'

' It's very well, Sir,' said my lord, ' I shall make
* no disturbance before the ladies. I am very well
* satisfied. Your humble servant, Sir ; Lady Bella-
* ston, your most obedient.'

His lordship was no sooner gone, than Lady Bella-
ston coming up to Mr. Western, said, ' bless me, Sir,
* what have you done ? You know not whom you
* have affronted ; he is a nobleman of the first rank
* and fortune, and yesterday made proposals to your
* daughter : and such as I am sure you must accept
* with the highest pleasure.'

' Answer for yourself, lady cousin,' said the Squire.
* I will have nothing to do with any of your lords.
* My daughter shall have an honest country gentle-
* man ; I have pitched upon one for her,—and she
* shall ha' un.—I am sorry for the trouble she hath
* given your ladyship with all my heart.' Lady Bel-
laston made a civil speech upon the word trouble, to
which the Squire answered, ' Why that's kind,—
* and I would do as much for your ladyship. To be
* sure relations should do for one another. So I wish
* to

your ladyship a good night.—Come, Madam, you must go along with me by fair means, or I'll have you carried down to the coach.'

Sophia said she would attend him without force; but begged to go in a chair, for she said she should not able to ride any other way.

' Prithee,' cries the Squire, ' wout unt persuade me can't not ride in a coach, would'ft? That's a pretty thing surely! No, no, I'll never let thee out of my sight any more till art married, that I promise thee.' Sophia told him she saw he was resolved to break her heart. ' O break thy heart and be d—n'd,' quoth he, ' if a good husband will break it. I don't value a brass varden, not a hapenny of any undutiful b— upon earth.' He then took violently hold of her hand; upon which the parson once more interfered, begging him to use gentle methods. At that the Squire thundered out a curse, and bid the parson hold his tongue, saying, ' a'tn't in pulpit now? when art got up there I never mind what dost say; but I won't be priest-ritten, nor taught how to behave myself by thee. I wish your ladyship a good night. Come along, Sophy; be a good girl, and all shall be well. Shat ha un, d—n me shat ha un.'

Mrs. Honour appeared below stairs, and with a low curtsey to the Squire, offered to attend her mistress; but he pushed her away, saying, ' hold, Madam, hold, you come no more near my house.' ' And will you take my maid away from me?' said Sophia. ' Yes, indeed, Madam, will I,' cries the Squire; ' You need not fear being without a servant; I will get you another maid, and a better maid than this, who, I'd lay five pound to a crown, is no more a maid than my grannum. No, no, Sophy, she shall contrive no more escapes I promise you.' He then packed up his daughter and the parson into a hackney coach, after which he mounted himself, and ordered it to drive to his lodgings. In the way thither he suffered Sophia to be quiet, and entertained himself

himself with reading a lecture to the parson on good manners, and a proper behaviour to his betters.

It is possible he might not so easily have carried off his daughter from Lady Bellalton, had that good lady desired to have detained her; but in reality she was not a little pleased with the confinement into which Sophia was going: and as her project with Lord Fellamar had failed of success, she was well contented that other violent methods were now going to be used in favour of another man.

C H A P. VI.

By what means the Squire came to discover his daughter

THOUGH the reader in many histories is obliged to digest much more unaccountable appearances than this of Mr. Western, without any satisfaction at all; yet as we dearly love to oblige him whenever it is in our power, we shall now proceed to shew by what method the Squire discovered where his daughter was.

In the third chapter then of the preceding book, we gave a hint (for it is not our custom to unfold at any time more than is necessary for the occasion) that Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who was very desirous of reconciling herself to her uncle and aunt Western, thought she had a probable opportunity, by the service of preserving Sophia from committing the same crime which had drawn on herself the anger of her family. After much deliberation therefore she resolved to inform her aunt Western where her cousin was, and accordingly she writ the following letter, which we shall give the reader at length, for more reasons than one.

‘ Honoured Madam,

‘ The occasion of my writing this will perhaps make a letter of mine agreeable to my dear aunt, for the sake of one of her nieces, tho’ I have little reason to hope it will be so on the account of another.

Without more apology, as I was coming to throw my unhappy self at your feet, I met, by the strangest accident in the world, my cousin Sophy, whose history you are better acquainted with than myself, though, alas! I know infinitely too much; enough indeed to satisfy me, that unless she is immediately prevented, she is in danger of running into the same fatal mischief, which by foolishly and ignorantly refusing your most wise and prudent advice, I have unfortunately brought on myself.

In short, I have seen the man, nay, I was most part of yesterday in his company, and a charming young fellow I promise you he is. By what accident he came acquainted with me is too tedious to tell you now; but I have this morning changed my lodgings to avoid him, lest he should by my means discover my cousin; for he doth not yet know where she is, and it is adviseable he should not, till my uncle hath secured her.—No time therefore is to be lost; and I need only inform you, that she is now with lady Bellaston, whom I have seen, and who hath, I find, a design of concealing her from her family. You know, madam, she is a strange woman; but nothing could misbecome me more, than to presume to give any hint to one of your great understanding, and great knowledge of the world, besides barely informing you of the matter of fact.

I hope, madam, the care which I have shewn on this occasion for the good of my family, will recommend me again to the favour of a lady who hath always exerted so much zeal for the honour and true interest of us all; and that it may be a means of restoring me to your friendship, which hath made so great a part of my former, and is so necessary to my future happiness. I am,

With the utmost respect, honoured madam,

your most dutiful obliged niece,

and most obedient humble servant,

HARRIET FITZPATRICK.

Mrs.

Mrs. Western was now at her brother's house, where she had resided ever since the flight of Sophia, in order to administer comfort to the poor squire in his affliction. Of this comfort, which she doled out to him in daily portions, we have formerly given a specimen.

She was now standing with her back to the fire, and, with a pinch of snuff in her hand, was dealing forth this daily allowance of comfort to the squire, while he smoked his afternoon pipe, when she received the above letter; which she had no sooner read than she delivered it to him, saying, ‘There, sir, there is an account of your lost sheep. Fortune hath again restored her to you, and if you will be governed by my advice, it is possible you may yet preserve her.’

The squire had no sooner read the letter than he leaped from his chair, threw his pipe into the fire, and gave a loud huzza for joy. He then summoned his servants, called for his boots, and ordered the Chevalier and several other horses to be saddled, and that parson Supple should be immediately sent for. Having done this, he turned to his sister, caught her in his arms, and gave her a close embrace, saying, ‘Zounds! you don’t seem pleased; one would imagine you was sorry I have found the girl.’

‘Brother,’ answered she, ‘the deepest politicians, who see to the bottom, discover often a very different aspect of affairs, from what swims on the surface. It is true indeed, things do look rather less desperate than they did formerly in Holland, when Lewis the Fourteenth was at the gates of Amsterdam; but there is a delicacy required in this matter, which you will pardon me, brother, if I suspect you want. There is a decorum to be used with a woman of figure, such as lady Bellaston, brother, which requires a knowledge of the world, superior, I am afraid, to yours.’

‘Sister,’ cries the Squire, ‘I know you have no opinion of my parts; but I’ll shew you on this

‘ occasion who is a fool. Knowledge quotha! I have
not been in the country so long without having some
knowledge of warrants and the law of the land. I
know I may take my own wherever I can find it.
Shew me my own daughter, and if I don’t know
how to come at her, I’ll suffer you to call me a fool
as long as I live. There be justices of peace in
London, as well as in other places.’

‘ I protest,’ cries she, ‘ you make me tremble
for the event of this matter, which if you will pro-
ceed by my advice, you may bring to so good an
issue. Do you really imagine, brother, that the
house of a woman of figure is to be attacked by
warrants and brutal justices of the peace? I will
inform you how to proceed. As soon as you ar-
rive in town, and have got yourself into a decent
dress (for indeed, brother, you have none at present
fit to appear in) you must send your compliments
to lady Bellaston, and desire leave to wait on her.
When you are admitted to her presence, as you
certainly will be, and have told her your story,
and have made proper use of my name, (for I think
you only just know one another by sight, though
you are relations) I am confident she will withdraw
her protection from my niece, who hath certainly
imposed upon her. This is the only method—
Justices of peace indeed! do you imagine any such
event can arrive to a woman of figure in a civilized
nation?’

‘ D—n their figures,’ cries the squire; ‘ a pretty
civilized nation truly, where women are above the
the law. And what must I stand sending a parcel
of compliments to a confounded whore, that keeps
away a daughter from her own natural father? I
tell you, sister, I am not so ignorant as you think
me.—I know you would have women above
the law, but it is all a lie; I heard his lordship
say at a size, that no one is above the law. But this
of yours is Hanover law, I suppose.’

‘ Mr.

' Mr. Western,' said she, ' I think you daily improve in ignorance.—I protest you are grown an afruit bear.'

' No more a bear than yourself, sister Western,' said the squire.—' Pox ! you may talk of your civility an you will, I am sure you never shew any to me. I am no bear, no, nor no dog neither, though I know somebody that is something that begins with a b—— ; but pox ! I will shew you I have a got more good manners than some folks.'

' Mr. Western,' answered the lady, ' you may say what you please. *Je vous mesprise de tout mon cœur.* I shall not therefore be angry.—Besides, as my cousin with that odious Irish name justly says, I have that regard for the honour and true interest of my family, and that concern for my niece, who is a part of it, that I have resolved to go to town myself upon this occasion ; for indeed, indeed, brother, you are not a fit minister to be employed at a polite court.—Greenland—Greenland should always be the scene of the tramontane negotiation.

' I thank heaven,' cries the squire, ' I don't understand you now. You are got to your Hanoverian linguo. However, I'll shew you I scorn to be behind hand in civility with you ; and as you are not angry for what I have said, so I am not angry for what you have said. Indeed I have always thought it a folly for relations to quarrel ; and if they do now and then give a hasty word, why people should give and take ; for my part I never bear malice ; and I take it very kind of you to go up to London ; for I never was there but twice in my life, and then I did not stay above a fortnight at a time ; and to be sure I can't be expected to know much of the streets and the folks in that time. I never denied that you know'd all these matters better than I. For me to dispute that would be all as one, as for you to dispute the management of a

' pack of dogs, or the finding a hare fitting, with me.'—' Which I promise you,' says she, ' I never will.'—' Well, and I promise you,' returned he, ' that I never will dispute t'other.'

Here then a league was struck (to borrow a phrase from the lady) between the contending parties; and now the parson arriving, and the horses being ready, the Squire departed, having promised his sister to follow her advice, and she prepared to follow him the next day.

But having communicated these matters to the parson on the road, they both agreed that the prescribed formalities might very well be dispensed with; and the Squire having changed his mind, proceeded in the manner we have already seen.

C H A P. VII.

In which various misfortunes befel poor Jones.

AFFAIRS were in the aforesaid situation, when Mrs. Honour arrived at Mrs. Miller's and called Jones out from the company, as we have before seen, with whom, when she found herself alone, she began as follows.

' O my dear Sir, how shall I get spirits to tell you; you are undone, Sir, and my poor lady's undone, and I am undone.' ' Hath any thing happened to Sophia?' cries Jones, staring like a madman. ' All that is bad,' cries Honour; ' O I shall never get such another lady! O that I should ever live to see this day!'—At these words Jones turned pale as ashes, trembled and stammered; but Honour went on: ' O Mr. Jones, I have lost my lady for ever.' How! What! for Heaven's sake tell me.—' O my dear Sophia!'—' You may well call her so,' said Honour; ' she was the dearest lady to me.—I shall never have such another place.'—' D—n your place,' cries Jones; ' where is?—what! what is become of my Sophia?' ' Ay, to be sure,' cries she,

The, 'servants may be d—n'd. It signifies nothing what becomes of them, though they are turned away, and ruined ever so much. To be sure they are not flesh and blood like other people. No to be sure, it signifies nothing what becomes of them.' —' If you have any pity, any compassion,' cries Jones, ' I beg you will instantly tell me what hath happened to Sophia?' ' To be sure I have more pity for you than you have for me,' answered Honour; ' I don't d—n you because you have lost the sweetest lady in the world. To be sure you are worthy to be pitied, and I am worthy to be pitied too: for to be sure if ever there was a good mistress' —' What hath happened?' cries Jones, in almost a raving fit.—' What?—What?' said Honour; ' why the worst that could have happened both for you and for me.—Her father is come to town, and hath carried her away from us both.' Here Jones fell on his knees in thanksgiving that it was no worse.—' No worse!' repeated Honour, ' what could be worse for either of us? He carried her off, swearing she should marry Mr. Blifil; that's for your comfort; and for poor me, I am turned out of doors.' ' Indeed, Mrs. Honour,' answered Jones, ' you frightened me out of my wits. I imagined some most dreadful sudden accident had happened to Sophia; something, compared to which, even the seeing her married to Blifil would be a trifle; but while there is life, there are hopes, my dear Honour. Women in this land of liberty cannot be married by actual brutal force.' ' To be sure, sir,' said she, ' that's true. There may be some hopes for you; but alack-a-day! what hopes are there for poor me? And to be sure, sir, you must be sensible I suffer all this upon your account. All the quarrel the squire hath to me, is for taking your part, as I have done, against Mr. Blifil.' ' Indeed, Mrs. Honour,' answered he, ' I am sensible of my obligations to you, and will leave nothing in my power

" power undone to make you amends." " Alas, sir," said she, " what can make a servant amends for the loss of one place, but the getting another altogether as good?" — " Do not despair, Mrs. Honour," said Jones, " I hope to reinstate you again in the same." " Alack-a-day, sir," said she, " how can I flatter myself with such hopes, when I know it is a thing impossible; for the squire is so set against me: and yet if you should ever have my lady, as to be sure I now hopes heartily you will; for you are a generous good-natured gentleman, and I am sure you loves her, and to be sure she loves you as dearly as her own soul; it is a matter in vain to deny it; because as why, every body that is in the least acquainted with my lady, must see it; for, poor dear lady, she can't dissemble; and if two people who loves one another a'n't happy, why who should be so? Happiness don't always depend upon what people has; besides, my lady has enough for both. To be sure therefore, as one may say, it would be all the pity in the world to keep two such lovers asunder; nay, I am convinced for my part, you will meet together at last; for if it is to be, there is no preventing it. If a marriage is made in heaven, all the justices of peace upon earth can't break it off. To be sure I wishes that parson Supple had but a little more spirit to tell the squire of his wickedness in endeavouring to force his daughter contrary to her liking; but then his whole dependance is on the squire, and so the poor gentleman, though he is a very religious good sort of a man, and talks of the badness of such doings behind the squire's back, yet he dares not say his soul is his own to his face. To be sure I never saw him make so bold as just now; I was afraid the squire would have struck him.—I would not have your honour be melancholy, sir, nor despair; things may go better, as long as you are sure of my lady, and that I am certain you may be; for she never will be

be brought to consent to marry any other man.
Indeed, I am terribly afraid the squire will do her
a mischief in his passion : for he is a prodigious
passionate gentleman, and I am afraid too the poor
lady will be brought to break her heart ; for she
is as tender-hearted as a chicken ; it is pity, me-
thinks, she had not a little of my courage. If I
was in love with a young man, and my father of-
fered to lock me up, I'd tear his eyes out, but I'd
come at him ; but then there's a great fortune in
the case, which it is in her father's power either to
give her or not ; that, to be sure, may make some
difference.

Whether Jones gave strict attention to all the fore-
going harangue, or whether it was for want of any
vacancy in the discourse, I cannot determine ; but
he never once attempted to answer, nor did she once
stop, till Partridge came running into the room, and
informed him that the great lady was upon the
stairs.

Nothing could equal the dilemma to which Jones
was now reduced. Honour knew nothing of any
acquaintance that subsisted between him and lady
Bellaston, and she was almost the last person in the
world to whom he would have communicated it.
In this hurry and distress, he took (as is common
enough) the worst course, and instead of exposing her
to the lady, which would have been of little conse-
quence, he chose to expose the lady to her ; he there-
fore resolved to hide Honour, whom he had but just
time to convey behind the bed, and to draw the cur-
tains.

The hurry in which Jones had been all day en-
gaged on account of his poor landlady and her family,
the terrors occasioned by Mrs. Honour, and the con-
fusion into which he was thrown by the sudden ar-
rival of lady Bellaston, had altogether driven former
thoughts out of his head ; so that it never once oc-
curr'd to his memory to act the part of a sick man.

which indeed neither the gaiety of his dress, nor the freshness of his countenance, would have at all supported.

He received her ladyship therefore rather agreeably to her desires than to her expectations, with all the good humour he could muster in his countenance, and without any real or affected appearance of the least disorder.

Lady Bellaston no sooner entered the room, than she squatted herself down on the bed : ‘ So, my dear ‘ Jones,’ said she, ‘ you find nothing can detain me ‘ long from you. Perhaps I ought to be angry with ‘ you, that I have neither seen nor heard from you ‘ all day ; for I perceive your distemper would have ‘ suffered you to come abroad : nay I suppose you ‘ have not sat in your chamber all day dress'd up like a ‘ fine lady to see company after her lying-inn ; but ‘ however, don’t think I intend to scold you : for I ‘ never will give you an excuse for the cold behaviour ‘ of a husband, by putting on the ill humour of a ‘ wife.’

‘ Nay, lady Bellaston,’ said Jones, ‘ I am sure ‘ your ladyship will not upbraid me with neglect of ‘ duty, when I only waited for orders. Who, my ‘ dear creature, hath reason to complain ? who missed ‘ an appointment last night, and left an unhappy man ‘ to expect, and wish, and sigh, and languish ? ’

‘ Do not mention it, my dear Mr. Jones,’ cried she. ‘ If you knew the occasion, you would pity ‘ me. In short, it is impossible to conceive what ‘ women of condition are obliged to suffer from the ‘ impertinence of fools, in order to keep up the farce ‘ of the world. I am glad, however, all your lan- ‘ guishing and wishing have done you no harm : for ‘ you never looked better in your life. Upon my ‘ faith, Jones, you might at this instant fit for the ‘ picture of Adonis.’

There are certain words of provocation which men of honour hold can only properly be answered by

by a blow. Among lovers possibly there may be some expressions which can be only answered by a kiss. The compliment which lady Bellaston now made Jones seems to be of this kind, especially as it was attended with a look in which the lady conveyed more soft ideas than it was possible to express with her tongue.

Jones was certainly at this instant in one of the most disagreeable and distressed situations imaginable; for, to carry on the comparison we made use of before, though the provocation was given by the lady, Jones could not receive satisfaction, nor so much as offer to ask it, in the presence of a third person; seconds in this kind of duels not being according to the law of arms. As this objection did not occur to lady Bellaston, who was ignorant of any other woman being there but herself, she waited some time in great astonishment for an answer from Jones, who, conscious of the ridiculous figure he made, stood at a distance, and not daring to give the proper answer, gave none at all. Nothing can be imagined more comic, nor yet more tragical than this scene would have been, if it had lasted much longer. The lady had already changed colour two or three times; and got up from the bed and sat down again, while Jones was wishing the ground to sink under him, or the house to fall on his head, when an odd accident freed him from an embarrassment, out of which neither the eloquence of a Cicero, nor the politicks of a Machiavel could have delivered him without utter disgrace.

This was no other than the arrival of young Nightingale dead drunk; or rather in that state of drunkenness which deprives men of the use of their reason, without depriving them of the use of their limbs.

Mrs. Miller and her daughters were in bed, and Partridge was smoaking his pipe by the kitchen fire; so that he arrived at Mr. Jones's chamber door without any interruption. This he burst open, and was entering

entering without any ceremony, when Jones started from his seat, and ran to oppose him; which he did so effectually, that Nightingale never came far enough within the door to see who was sitting on the bed.

Nightingale had in reality mistaken Jones's apartment for that in which himself had lodged; he therefore strongly insisted on coming in, often swearing that he would not be kept from his own bed. Jones, however, prevailed over him, and delivered him into the hands of Partridge, whom the noise on the stairs soon summoned to his master's assistance.

And now Jones was unwillingly obliged to return to his own apartment, where at the very instant of his entrance he heard lady Bellaston venting an exclamation, though not a very loud one; and at the same time, saw her flinging herself into a chair in a vast agitation, which in a lady of a tender constitution would have been an hysterick fit.

In reality the lady, frightened with the struggle between the two men, of which she did not know what would be the issue, as she heard Nightingale swear many oaths he would come to his own bed, attempted to retire to her known place of hiding, which to her great confusion she found already occupied by another.

' Is this usage to be borne, Mr. Jones?' cries the lady, '—basest of men?—What wretch is this to whom you have exposed me!'—' Wretch!' cries Honour, bursting in a violent rage from her place of concealment—' marry come up!—wretch forsooth! —As poor a wretch as I am, I am honest; that is more than some folks who are richer can say.'

Jones, instead of applying himself directly to take off the edge of Mrs. Honour's resentment, as a more experienced gallant would have done, fell to cursing his stars, and lamenting himself as the most unfortunate man in the world; and presently after, addressing himself to lady Bellaston, he fell to some very

absurd

absurd protestations of innocence. By this time the lady having recovered the use of her reason, which she had as ready as any other woman in the world, especially on such occasions, calmly replied; ‘ Sir, you need make no apologies; I see now who the person is; I did not at first know Mrs. Honour; but now I do, I can suspect nothing wrong between her and you; and I am sure she is a woman of too good sense to put any wrong constructions upon my visit to you; I have been always her friend, and it may be in my power to be much more so hereafter.’

Mrs. Honour was altogether as placable, as she was passionate. Hearing therefore lady Bellaston assume the soft tone, she likewise softened her’s—‘ I am sure, Madam,’ says she, ‘ I have been always ready to acknowledge your ladyship’s friendships to me; sure I never had so good a friend as your ladyship—and to be sure now I see it is your ladyship that I spoke to, I could almost bite my tongue off for very mad.—I constructions upon your ladyship!—to be sure it doth not become a servant as I am to think about such a great great lady—I mean I was a servant: for indeed I am nobody’s servant now, the more miserable wretch is me.—I have lost the best mis’ trcs’—Here Honour thought fit to produce a shower of tears.—‘ Don’t cry, child,’ says the good lady: ‘ Ways perhaps may be found to make you amends. Come to me to-morrow morning.’ She then took up her fan which lay on the ground, and without even looking at Jones, walked very majestically out of the room; there being a kind of dignity in the impudence of women of quality, which their inferiors vainly aspire to attain to in circumstances of this nature.

Jones followed her down stairs, often offering her his hand, which she absolutely refused him, and got into her chair without taking any notice of him as he stood bowing before her.

At his return up stairs, a long dialogue past between him and Mrs. Honour, while she was adjusting herself after the discomposure she had undergone. The subject of this was his infidelity to her young lady; on which she enlarged with great bitterness; but Jones at last found means to reconcile her, and not only so, but to obtain a promise of most inviolable secrecy, and that she would the next morning endeavour to find out Sophia, and bring him a further account of the proceedings of the Squire.

Thus ended this unfortunate adventure to the satisfaction only of Mrs. Honour; for a secret (as some of my readers will perhaps acknowledge from experience) is often a very valuable possession; and that not only to those who faithfully keep it, but sometimes to such as whisper it about till it come to the ears of every one, except the ignorant person, who pays for the supposed concealing of what is publickly known.

C H A P. VIII.

Short and sweet.

NOtwithstanding all the obligations she had received from Jones, Mrs. Miller could not forbear in the morning some gentle remonstrances for the hurricane which had happened the preceding night in his chamber. These were however so gentle and so friendly; professing, and indeed truly, to aim at nothing more than the real good of Mr. Jones himself, that he, far from being offended, thankfully received the admonition of the good woman, expressed much concern for what had past, excused it as well as he could, and promised never more to bring the same disturbances into the house.

But though Mrs. Miller did not refrain from a short expostulation in private at their first meeting; yet the occasion of his being summoned down stairs that morning was of a much more agreeable kind; being indeed to perform the office of a father to Miss Nancy, and

and to give her in wedlock to Mr. Nightingale, who was now ready drest, and full as sober as many of my readers will think a man ought to be who receives a wife in so imprudent a manner.

And here perhaps it may be proper to account for the escape which this young gentleman had made from his uncle, and for his appearance in the condition in which we have seen him the night before.

Now when the uncle had arrived at his lodgings with his nephew, partly to indulge his own inclinations (for he dearly loved his bottle) and partly to disqualify his nephew from the immediate execution of his purpose, he ordered wine to be set on the table; with which he so briskly ply'd the young gentleman, that this latter, who, tho' not much used to drinking, did not detest it so as to be guilty of disobedience, or of want of complaisance by refusing, was soon completely finished.

Just as the uncle had obtained this victory, and was preparing a bed for his nephew, a messenger arrived with a piece of news, which so entirely disconcerted and shocked him, that he in a moment lost all consideration for his nephew, and his whole mind became entirely taken up with his own concerns.

This sudden and afflicting news was no less than that his daughter had taken the opportunity of almost the first moment of his absence; and had gone off with a neighbouring young clergyman; against whom tho' her father could have but one objection, namely, that he was worth nothing, yet she had never thought proper to communicate her amour even to that father; and so artfully had she managed, that it had never been once suspected by any, till now, that it was consummated.

Old Mr. Nightingale no sooner received this account, than in the utmost confusion he ordered a post-chaise to be instantly got ready, and having recommended his nephew to the care of a servant, he directly

Iy left the house, scarce knowing what he did nor whither he went.

The uncle being thus departed, when the servant came to attend the nephew to bed, had waked him for that purpose, and had at last made him sensible that his uncle was gone, he, instead of accepting the kind offices tendered him, insisted on a chair being called; with this the servant, who had received no strict orders to the contrary, readily complied; and thus being conducted back to the house of Mrs. Miller, he had staggered up to Mr. Jones's chamber, as hath been before recounted.

This bar of the uncle being now removed (though young Nightingale knew not as yet in what manner) and all parties being quickly ready, the mother, Mr. Jones, Mr. Nightingale, and his love, slept into a hackney-coach which conveyed him to Doctors commons; where Miss Nancy was, in vulgar language, soon made an honest woman; and the poor mother became, in the purest sense of the word, one of the happiest of all human beings.

And now Mr. Jones having seen his good offices to that poor woman and her family brought to a happy conclusion, began to apply himself to his own concerns; but here lest many of my readers should censure his folly for thus troubling himself with the affairs of others, and lest some few should think he acted more disinterestedly than indeed he did, we think proper to assure our reader, that he was so far from being unconcerned in this matter, that he had indeed a very considerable interest in bringing it to that final consummation.

To explain this seeming paradox at once, he was one who could truly say with him in Terence, *homo sum : nihil humani a me alienum puto*. He was never an indifferent spectator of the misery or happiness of any one; and he felt either the one or the other in greater proportion as he himself contributed to either. He could not therefore be the instrument of raising a whole

whole family from the lowest state of wretchedness to the highest pitch of joy, without conveying great felicity to himself; more perhaps than worldly men often purchase to themselves by undergoing the most severe labour, and often by wading through the deepest iniquity.

Those readers who are of the same complexion with him, will perhaps think this short chapter contains abundance of matter; while others may probably wish, short as it is, that it had been totally spared as impertinent to the main design, which I suppose they conclude is to bring Mr. Jones to the gallows, or if possible, to a more deplorable catastrophe.

C H A P. IX.

Containing love-letters of several sorts.

M R. Jones, at his return home, found the following letters lying on his table, which he luckily opened in the order they were sent.

L E T T E R I.

' Surely I am under some strange infatuation; I
' cannot keep my resolutions a moment, however
' strongly made or justly founded. Last night I re-
' solved never to see you more; this morning I am
' willing to hear if you can, as you say, clear up this
' affair. And yet I know that to be impossible. I
' have said every thing to myself which you can in-
' vent.—Perhaps not. Perhaps your invention is
' stronger. Come to me therefore the moment you
' receive this. If you can forge an excuse, I almost
' promise you to believe it. Betrayed to—I will
' think no more.—Come to me directly.—This is the
' third letter I have writ, the two former are burnt.
' I am almost inclined to burn this too—I wish I
' may preserve my senses.—Come to me presently.'

LETTER

LETTER II.

' If you ever expect to be forgiven, or even suffer
ed within my doors, come to me this instant.'

LETTER III.

' I now find you was not at home when my notes
came to your lodgings. The moment you receive
this let me see you; — I shall not stir out; nor shall
any body be let in but yourself. Sure nothing can
detain you long.'

Jones had just read over those three billets, when Mr. Nightingale came into the room. Well, Tom,' said he, ' any news from lady Bellaston, after last night's adventure ?' (for it was now no secret to any one in that house who the lady was.) ' The lady Bellaston !' answered Jones very gravely—' Nay, dear Tom,' cries Nightingale, ' don't be so reserved to your friends. Though I was too drunk to see her last night, I saw her at the masquerade. Do you think I am ignorant who the queen of the fairies is ?' ' And did you really then know the lady at the masquerade ?' said Jones. Yes, upon my soul did I,' said Nightingale, and have given you twenty hints of it since, though you seemed always so tender on that point that I would not speak plainly. I fancy, my friend, by your extreme nicety in this matter, you are not so well acquainted with the character of the lady, as with her person. Don't be angry, Tom: but upon my honour, you are not the first young fellow she hath debauched. Her reputation is in no danger, believe me.'

Though Jones had no reason to imagine the lady to have been of the vestal kind when his amour began; yet as he was thoroughly ignorant of the town, and had very little acquaintance in it, he had yet no knowledge of that character which is vulgarly called a demirep; that is to say, a woman who intrigues with

with every man she likes, under the name and appearance of virtue; and who, though some ever nice ladies will not be seen with her, is visited (as they term it) by the whole town; in short, whom every one knows to be what no body calls her.

When he found, therefore, that Nightingale was perfectly acquainted with his intrigue, and began to suspect, that so scrupulous a delicacy as he had hitherto observed, was not quite necessary on the occasion, he gave a latitude to his friend's tongue, and desired him him to speak plainly what he knew, or had ever heard of the lady.

Nightingale, who, in many other instances, was rather too effeminate in his disposition, had a pretty strong inclination to tittle-tattle. He had no sooner, therefore, received full liberty of speaking from Jones, than he entered upon a long narrative concerning the lady; which, as it contained many particulars highly to her dishonour, we have too great a tenderness for all women of condition to repeat. We would cautiously avoid giving an opportunity to the future commentators on our works, of making any malicious application; and of forcing us to be, against our will, the author of scandal, which never entered into our head.

Jones having very attentively heard all that Nightingale had to say, fetched a deep sigh, which the other observing, cried, 'Heyday! why thou art not in love, I hope! Had I imagined my stories would have affected you, I promise you should never have heard them.'—'O my dear friend,' cries Jones, 'I am so entangled with this woman, that I know not how to extricate myself.'—'In love indeed?'—'No, my friend, but I am under obligations to her, and very great ones. Since you know so much, I will be very explicit with you. It is owing perhaps solely to her, that I have not before this wanted a bit of bread. How can I possibly desert such a woman? and yet I must desert her, or be guilty'

‘ guilty of the blackest treachery to one, who deserves infinitely better of me than she can : a woman, my Nightingale, for whom I have a passion which few can have an idea of. I am half distract with doubts how to act.’—‘ And is this other, pray, an honourable mistress?’ cries Nightingale. ‘ Honourable!’ answered Jones; ‘ No breath ever yet durst fully her reputation. The sweetest air is not purer, the limpid stream not clearer than her honour. She is all over, both in mind and body, consummate perfection. She is the most beautiful creature in the universe; and yet she is mistress of such noble, elevated qualities, that though she is never from my thoughts, I scarce ever think of her beauty, but when I see it.’—‘ And can you, my good friend,’ cries Nightingale, ‘ with such an engagement as this upon your hands, hesitate a moment about quitting such a —.’ ‘ Hold,’ said Jones, ‘ no more abuse of her; I detest the thought of ingratitude.’—‘ Pooh!’ answered the other, ‘ you are not the first upon whom she hath conferred obligations of this kind. She is remarkably liberal where she likes; though, let me tell you, her favours are so prudently bestowed, that they should rather raise a man’s vanity, than his gratitude.’ In short, Nightingale proceeded so far on this head, and told his friend so many stories of the lady, which he swore to the truth of, that he entirely removed all esteem for her from the breast of Jones; and his gratitude was lessened in proportion. Indeed he began to look on all the favours he had received, rather as wages than benefits, which not only depreciated her, but himself too in his own conceit, and put him quite out of humour with both. From this disgust, his mind, by a natural transition, turned towards Sophia; her virtue, her purity, her love to him, her sufferings on his account, filled all his thoughts, and made his commerce with lady Bellaston appear still more odious. The result of all was, that though his turning himself out

of her *service*, in which light he now saw his affair with her, would be the loss of his bread ; yet he determined to quit her, if he could but find a handsome pretence ; which having communicated to his friend, Nightingale considered a little, and then said, ‘ I have it, my boy ! I have found out a sure method : propose marriage to her, and I would venture hanging upon the success.’ ‘ Marriage !’ cries Jones. ‘ Ay, propose marriage,’ answered Nightingale, ‘ and she will declare off in a moment. I knew a young fellow whom she kept formerly, who made the offer to her in earnest, and was presently turned off for his pains.’

Jones declared he could not venture the experiment. ‘ Perhaps,’ said he, ‘ she may be less shocked at this proposal from one man than from another. And if she should take me at my word, where am I then ? Caught in my own trap, and undone for ever.’ ‘ No ;’ answered Nightingale, ‘ not if I can give you an expedient, by which you may, at any time, get out of the trap.’ — ‘ What expedient can that be ?’ replied Jones. ‘ This,’ answered Nightingale. ‘ The young fellow I mentioned, who is one of the most intimate acquaintances I have in the world, is so angry with her for some ill offices she hath since done him, that I am sure he would, without any difficulty, give you a sight of her letters ; upon which you may decently break with her ; and declare off before the knot is tied, if she should really be willing to tie it, which I am convinced she will not.’

After some hesitation, Jones, upon the strength of this assurance, consented ; but as he swore he wanted the confidence to propose the matter to her face, he wrote the following letter, which Nightingale dictated :

‘ Madam,
I am extremely concerned, that, by an unfortunate

nate engagement abroad, I should have missed receiving the honour of your ladyship's commands the moment they came; and the delay which I must now suffer of vindicating myself to your ladyship, greatly adds to this misfortune. O lady Bellaston, what a terror have I been in, for fear your reputation should be exposed by these perverse accidents. There is one only way to secure it. I need not name what that is. Only permit me to say, that as your honour is as dear to me as my own; so my sole ambition is to have the glory of laying my liberty at your feet; and believe me when I assure you, I can never be made completely happy, without you generously bestow on me a legal right of calling you mine for ever. I am, madam,

with most profound respect,
your ladyship's most obliged,
obedient humble servant,

THOMAS JONES.

To this she presently returned the following answer:

Sir,

When I read over your serious epistle, I could from its coldness and formality, have sworn that you had already the legal right you mention; nay, that we had, for many years, composed that monstrous animal a husband and wife. Do you really then imagine me a fool? or do you fancy yourself capable of so entirely persuading me out of my senses, that I should deliver my whole fortune into your power, in order to enable you to support your pleasures at my expence. Are these the proofs of love which I expected? is this the return for—but I scorn to upbraid you, and am in great admiration of your profound respect.

P. S. I am prevented from revising:—Perhaps I have said more than I meant.—Come to me at eight this evening.

Jones,

Jones, by the advice of his privy-council, replied,

‘ Madam,

‘ It is impossible to express how much I am shocked at the suspicion you entertain of me. Can lady Bellaston have conferred favours on a man whom she could believe capable of so base a design? or can she treat the most solemn tie of love with contempt! can you imagine, madam, that if the violence of my passion, in an unguarded moment, overcame the tenderness which I have for your honour, that I would think of indulging myself in the continuance of an intercourse which could not possibly escape long the notice of the world; and which, when discovered, must prove so fatal to your reputation? if such be your opinion of me, I must pray for a sudden opportunity of returning those pecuniary obligations, which I have been so unfortunate to receive at your hands; and for those of a more tender kind, I shall ever remain, &c.’ And so concluded in the very words with which he had concluded the former letter.

The lady answered as follows :

‘ I see you are a villain; and I despise you from my soul. If you come here I shall not be at home.’

Though Jones was well satisfied with his deliverance from a thralldom which those who have ever experienced it, will, I apprehend, allow to be none of the lightest, he was not, however, perfectly easy in his mind. There was, in this scheme, too much of fallacy to satisfy one who utterly detested every species of falsehood or dishonesty: nor would he, indeed, have submitted to put it in practice, had he not been involved in a distressful situation, where he was obliged to be guilty of some dishonour, either to the one lady or the other; and surely the reader will allow, that

every good principle, as well as love, pleaded strongly in favour of Sophia.

Nightingale highly exulted in the success of his stratagem, upon which he received many thanks, and much applause from his friend. He answered,

' Dear Tom, we have conferred very different obligations on each other. To me you owe the regain, bring your liberty; to you I owe the loss of mine.'

' But if you are as happy in the one instance as I am in the other, I promise you, we are the two happiest fellows in England.'

The two gentlemen were now summoned down to dinner, where Mrs. Miller, who performed herself the office of cook, had exerted her best talents, to celebrate the wedding of her daughter. This joyful circumstance she ascribed principally to the friendly behaviour of Jones; her whole soul was fired with gratitude towards him, and all her looks, words and actions were so busied in expressing it, that her daughter, and even her new son-in-law, were very little the objects of her consideration.

Dinner was just ended when Mrs. Miller received a letter; but as we have had letters enough in this chapter, we shall communicate the contents in our next,

C H A P. X.

Confuting partly of facts, and partly of observations upon them.

TH E letter then which arrived at the end of the preceding chapter was from Mr. Allworthy, and the purport of it was his intention to come immediately to town, with his nephew Blifil, and a desire to be accommodated with his usual lodgings, which were the first floor for himself, and the second for his nephew.

The cheerfulness which had before displayed itself in the countenance of the poor woman, was a little clouded.

clouded on this occasion. This news did indeed a good deal disconcert her. To requite so disinterested a match with her daughter, by presently turning her new son-in-law out of doors, appeared to her very unjustifiable on the one hand; and, on the other, she could scarce bear the thoughts of making any excuse to Mr. Allworthy, after all the obligations received from him, for depriving him of lodgings which were indeed strictly his due: for that gentleman, in conferring all his numberless benefits on others, acted by a rule diametrically opposite to what is practised by most generous people. He contrived, on all occasions, to hide his beneficence not only from the world, but even from the object of it. He constantly used the words *lend* and *pay*, instead of *give*; and by every other method he could invent, always lessened with his tongue the favours he conferred while he was heaping them with both his hands. When he settled the annuity of 50l. a year, therefore, on Mrs. Miller, he told her, ‘it was in consideration of always having her first floor when he was in town,’ (which he scarce ever intended to be) ‘but that she might let it at any other time, for that he would always send her a month’s warning.’ He was now, however, hurried to town so suddenly, that he had no opportunity of giving such notice; and this hurry probably prevented him, when he wrote for his lodgings, adding, *if they were then empty*: for he would most certainly have been well satisfied to have relinquished them on a less sufficient excuse than what Mrs. Miller could now have made.

But there are a sort of persons, who, as Prior excellently well remarks, direct their conduct by something

Beyond the fixed and settled rules.

Of vice and virtue in the schools:

Beyond the letter of the law.

To these it is so far from being sufficient, that their defence would acquit them at the Old Bailey,

that they are not even contented, though conscience, the severest of all judges, should discharge them.—Nothing short of the fair and honourable will satisfy the delicacy of their minds; and if any of their actions fall short of this mark, they mope and pine, are as uneasy and restless as a murderer, who is afraid of a ghost or of the hangman.

Mrs. Miller was one of these. She could not conceal her uneasiness at this letter; with the contents of which she had no sooner acquainted the company, and given some hints of her distress, than Jones, her good angel, presently relieved her anxiety. ‘As for myself, madam,’ said he, ‘my lodging is at your service at a moment’s warning: and Mr. Nightingale, I am sure, as he cannot yet prepare a house fit to receive his lady, will consent to return to his new lodging, whither Mrs. Nightingale will certainly consent to go.’ With which proposal both husband and wife instantly agreed.

The reader will easily believe, that the cheeks of Mrs. Miller began again to glow with additional gratitude to Jones; but, perhaps, it may be more difficult to persuade him, that Mr. Jones having, in his last speech, called her daughter Mrs. Nightingale, (it being the first time that agreeable sound had ever reached her ears) gave the fond mother more satisfaction, and warmed her heart more towards Jones, than his having dissipated her present anxiety.

The next day was then appointed for the removal of the new-married couple, and of Mr. Jones, who was likewise to be provided for in the same house with his friend. And now the serenity of the company was again restored, and they past the day in the utmost clearfulness, all except Jones, who, though he outwardly accompanied the rest in their mirth, felt many a bitter pang on the account of his Sophia; which were not a little heightened by the news of Mr. Blifil’s coming to town (for he clearly saw the intention of his journey): and what greatly

agra-

aggravated his concern was, that Mrs. Honour, who had promised to enquire after Sophia, and to make her report to him early the next evening, had disappointed him.

In the situation that he and his mistress were in at this time, there were scarce any grounds for him to hope that he should hear any good news; yet he was as impatient to see Mrs. Honour, as if he had expected she would bring him a letter with an assignation in it from Sophia, and bore the disappointment as ill. Whether this impatience arose from that natural weakness of the human mind, which makes it desirous to know the worst, and renders uncertainty the most intolerable of pains; or whether he still flattered himself with some secret hopes, we will not determine. But that it might be the last, whoever has loved cannot but know. For of all the powers exercised by this passion over our minds, one of the most wonderful is that of supporting hope in the midst of despair. Difficulties, improbabilities, nay, impossibilities are quite overlooked by it; so that to any man extremely in love, may be applied what Addison says of Cæsar,

The Alps and Pyrenæans sink before him!

Yet it is equally true, that the same passion will sometimes make mountains of molehills, and produce despair in the midst of hope; but these cold fits last not long in good constitutions. Which temper Jones was now in, we leave the reader to guess, having no exact information about it; but this is certain, that he had spent two hours in expectation, when being unable any longer to conceal his uneasiness, he retired to his room; where his anxiety had almost made him frantick, when the following letter was brought him from Mrs. Honour, with which we shall present the reader *verbatim & literatim*.

S I R,

I shud fartenly haf kaled on you a cordin too mi
 * promiss haddunt itt bin that hur lashipp prevent
 * mee; for too bee sur, sir, you nose very well that
 * evere persun must luk furst at ome, and fartenly such
 * anuther offar mite not ave ever hapned, so as I
 * shud ave bin justly to blam, had I not excepted of
 * it when her lashipp was so veri kind as to offar to
 * make mee hur one uman without mi ever askin any
 * such thing, too be sur shee is one of thee best ladis
 * in thee wurld, and pepil who safe to the kontrari
 * must bee veri wiked pepil in thare harts. To be
 * sur if ever I ave sad any thing of that kine, it as bin
 * thru ignorens, and I am hartili sorri for it. I nose
 * your onur to be a genteelman of more onur and
 * onestly, if I ever said ani such thing, to repeate it to hurt
 * a pore servtant that as alwais ad thee gratest respect
 * in thee wurld for ure onur. To bee sur won shud
 * kepe wons tung within one's teeth, for no boddi
 * nose what may happen; and too bee sur, if ani
 * boddi ad tolde mee yesterday that I shud haf bin in
 * so gud a place to day, I shud not haf beleeeved it;
 * fer too bee sur I never was a dremd of any such
 * thing, nor shud I ever have soft after ani other
 * bodi's plase; but as her lashipp wass so kine of her
 * one a corde too give it mee without askin, to bee
 * sur Mrs. Etoff herself, nor no other boddi can
 * blam mee for exceptin such a thing when it falls in
 * my waye. I beg ure onur not too menshion ani
 * thing of what I haf sad, for I wish ure onur all the
 * gud luk in thee wurld; and Idon't cueftion butt that
 * u wil haf madame Sofia in the end; but as to misself
 * ure onur nose I kant bee of ani farder farvis to u
 * in that mattar, nou bein under the cumand of anu
 * thar parson, and not my one mistres. I begg ure
 * onur to say nothing of what past, and belive me
 * be, sir,

Ure onur's umble farvant to cumand till deth,

HONOUR BLACKMORE.

Various

Various were the conjectures which Jones entertained for this step of lady Bellaston; who in reality had little farther design than to secure within her own house the repository of a secret, which she chose should make no farther progress than it had made already; but mostly she desired to keep it from the ears of Sophia; for though that young lady was almost the only one who would never have repeated it again, her ladyship could not persuade herself of this; since as she now hated poor Sophia with most implacable hatred, she conceived a reciprocal hatred to herself to be lodged in the tender breast of our heroine, where no such passion had ever yet found an entrance.

While Jones was terrifying himself with the apprehension of a thousand dreadful machinations, and deep political designs which he imagined to be at the bottom of the promotion of Honour, fortune, who hitherto seems to have been an utter enemy to his match with Sophia, tried a new method to put a final end to it, by throwing a temptation in the way of Jones, which in his present desperate situation it seemed unlikely he should be able to resist,

C H A P. XI.

Containing curious, but not unprecedented matter.

TH E R E was a lady, one Mrs. Hunt, who had often seen Jones at the house where he lodged, being intimately acquainted with the women there, and indeed a very great friend to Mrs. Miller. Her age was about thirty; for she owned six and twenty; her face and person very good, only inclining a little too much to be fat. She had been married young by her relations to an old Turkey merchant, who having got a great fortune, had left off trade. With him she lived without reproach, but not without pain, in a state of great self-denial, for about twelve years; and her virtue was rewarded by his dying, and leav-

ing her very rich. The first year of her widowhood was just at an end, and she had past it in a good deal of retirement, seeing only a few particular friends, and dividing her time between her devotions and novels, of which she was always extremely fond. Very good health, a very warm constitution, and a great deal of religion, made it absolutely necessary for her to marry again; and she resolved to please herself in her second husband, as she had done her friends in the first. From her the following billet was brought to Jones.

‘ S I R,

‘ From the first day I saw you, I doubt my eyes
‘ have told you too plainly, that you were not indif-
‘ ferent to me; but neither my tongue nor my hand
‘ should have ever avowed it, had not the ladies of
‘ the family where you are lodged given me such a
‘ character of you, and told me such proofs of your
‘ virtue and goodness, as convince me you are not
‘ only the most agreeable, but the most worthy of
‘ men. I have also the satisfaction to hear from
‘ them, that neither my person, understanding, or
‘ character are disagreeable to you. I have a fortune
‘ sufficient to make us both happy, but which can-
‘ not make me so without you. In thus disposing of
‘ myself, I know I shall incur the censure of the
‘ world, but if I did not love you more than I fear
‘ the world, I should not be worthy of you. One
‘ only difficulty stops me: I am informed you are
‘ engaged in a commerce of gallantry with a woman
‘ of fashion. If you think it worth while to sacri-
‘ fice that to the possession of me, I am yours; if not,
‘ forget my weakness, and let this remain an eternal
‘ secret between you and

‘ ARABELLA HUNT.’

At the reading of this Jones was put into a violent flutter. His fortune was then at a very low ebb, the source being stopt from which hitherto he had been supplied,

supplied. Of all he had received from lady Bellaston not above five guineas remained, and that very morning he had been dunned by a tradesman for twice that sum. His honourable mistress was in the hands of her father, and he had scarce any hopes ever to get her out of them again. To be subsisted at her expence from that little fortune she had independent of her father, went much against the delicacy both of his pride and his love. This lady's fortune would have been exceeding convenient to him, and he could have no objection to her in any respect. On the contrary, he liked her as well as he did any woman except Sophia. But to abandon Sophia, and marry another, that was impossible; he could not think of it upon any account. Yet why should he not, since it was plain she could not be his? Would it not be kinder to her, than to continue her longer engaged in a hopeless passion for him? Ought he not to do so in friendship to her? This notion prevailed some moments, and he had almost determined to be false to her from a high point of honour; but that refinement was not able to stand very long against the voice of nature, which cried in his heart, that such friendship was treason to love. At last he called for pen, ink, and paper, and writ as follows to Mrs. Hunt:

' MADAM,

' It would be but a poor return to the favour you have done me, to sacrifice any gallantry to the possession of you, and I would certainly do it, though I were not disengaged, as at present I am, from any affair of that kind. But I should not be the honest man you think me, if I did not tell you, that my affections are engaged to another, who is a woman of virtue, and one that I never can leave, though it is probable I shall never possess her. God forbid that, in return of your kindness to me, I should do you such an injury, as to give you my hand, when I cannot give my heart. No, I had much rather

‘ starve than be guilty of that. Even though my
 ‘ mistress were married to another, I would not mar-
 ‘ ry you unless my heart had entirely effaced all im-
 ‘ pressions of her. Be assured that your secret was
 ‘ not more safe in your own breast, than in that of
 ‘ Your most obliged, and
 ‘ Grateful humble servant,
 ‘ T. JONES.’

When our hero had finished and sent this letter, he went to his scrutore, took out Miss Western's muff, kiss'd it several times, and then strutted some turns about the room, with more satisfaction of mind than ever any Irishman felt in carrying off a fortune of fifty thousand pounds.

C H A P. XII.

A discovery made by Partridge.

WHILE Jones was exulting in the consciousness of his integrity, Partridge came capering into the room, as was his custom when he brought, or fancied he brought, any good tidings. He had been dispatched that morning, by his master, with orders to endeavour, by the servants of lady Bellaston, or by any other means, to discover whither Sophia had been conveyed; and he now returned, and with a joyful countenance told our hero, that he had found the lost bird. ‘ I have seen, sir,’ said he, ‘ Black George the game-keeper, who is one of the servants whom the squire hath brought with him to town. I knew him presently, though I have not seen him these several years; but you know, sir, he is a very remarkable man, or to use a purer phrase, he hath a most remarkable beard, the largest and blackest I ever saw. It was some time however before Black George could recollect me.’—‘ Well, but what is your good news?’ cries Jones: ‘ What do you know of my Sophia?’—‘ You shall know presently,

sently, sir,' answered Partridge, ' I am coming to it as fast as I can.—You are so impatient, sir, you would come at the infinitive mood, before you can get to the imperative. As I was saying, sir, it was some time before he recollectec my fate.'—' Confound your face,' cries Jones, ' what of my Sophia?'—' Nay, sir,' answered Partridge, ' I know nothing more of madam Sophia, than what I am going to tell you; and I should have told you all before this if you had not interrupted me; but if you look so angry at me, you will frighten all of it out of my head, or to use a purer phrase, out of my memory. I never saw you look so angry since the day we left Upton, which I shall remember if I was to live a thousand years.'—' Well, pray go on in your own way,' said Jones, ' you are resolved to make me mad I find.' ' Not for the world,' answered Partridge, ' I have suffered enough for that already; which, as I said, I shall bear in my remembrance the longest day I have to live.'—' Well, but Black George!' cries Jones.—' Well, Sir, as I was saying, it was a long time before he could recollect me; for indeed I am very much altered since I saw him. *Non sum qualis eram.* I have had troubles in the world, and nothing alters a man so much as grief. I have heard it will change the colour of a man's hair in a night. However, at last, know me he did, that's sure enough; for we are both of an age, and were at the same charity-school. George was a great dunce, but no matter for that; all men do not thrive in the world according to their learning. I am sure I have reason to say so; but it will be all one a thousand years hence. Well, sir,—where was I?—O—well, we no sooner knew each other, than after many hearty shakes by the hand, we agreed to go to an alehouse and take a pot, and by good luck the beer was some of the best I have met with since I have been in town.—Now, sir, I am coming to the

point; for no sooner did I name you, and told him,
that you and I came to town together, and had
lived together ever since, than he called for another
pot, and swore he would drink to your health;
and indeed he drank your health so heartily, that
I was overjoyed to see there was so much gratitude
left in the world: and after we had emptied that
pot, I said I would be my pot too, and so we drank
another to your health; and then I made haste
home to tell you the news.'

'What news?' cries Jones, 'you have not mentioned a word of my Sophia!'—'Bless me! I had like to have forgot that. Indeed we mentioned a great deal about young madam Western, and George told me all; that Mr. Blifil is coming to town, in order to be married to her. He had best make haste then, says I, or somebody will have her before he comes; and indeed, says I, Mr. Seagrim, it is a thousand pities somebody should not have her; for he certainly loves her above all the women in the world. I would have both you and she know that it is not for her fortune he follows her; for I can assure you as to matter of that, there is another lady, one of much greater quality and fortune than she can pretend to, who is so fond of somebody, that she comes after him day and night.'

Here Jones fell into a passion with Partridge, for having, as he said, betrayed him; but the poor fellow answered, he had mentioned no name: 'Besides,' said he, 'I can assure you, George is sincerely your friend, and wished Mr. Blifil at the devil more than once; nay, he said he would do any thing in his power upon earth to serve you; and so I am convinced he will.—Betray you indeed! why I question whether you have a better friend than George upon earth, except myself, or one that would go farther to serve you.'

'Well,'

him,
I had
other
alth ;
that
tude
that
rank
table

Well,' says Jones, a little pacified, ' you say this fellow, who I believe indeed is enough inclined to be my friend, lives in the same house with Sophia ?'

' In the same house ?' answered Partridge; ' why, sir, he is one of the servants of the family, and very well drest I promise you he is; if it was not for his black beard, you would hardly know him.'

' One service then at least he may do me,' says Jones; ' sure he can certainly convey a letter to my Sophia.'

' You have hit the nail *ad unguem*, ' cries Partridge; ' how came I not to think of it ? I will engage he shall do it upon the very first mentioning.'

' Well then,' said Jones, ' do you leave me at present, and I will write a letter which you shall deliver to him to-morrow morning; for I suppose you know where to find him.'

' O yes, sir,' answered Partridge, ' I shall certainly find him again; there is no fear of that. The liquor is too good for him to stay away long. I make no doubt but he will be there every day he stays in town.'

' So you don't know the street then where my Sophia is lodged ?' cries Jones.

' Indeed, sir, I do,' says Partridge.

' What is the name of the street ?' cries Jones.

' The name, sir, why here, sir, just by,' answered Partridge, ' not above a street or two off. I don't indeed know the very name; for as he never told me, if I had asked, you know it might have put some suspicion into his head. No, no, sir, let me alone for that. I am too cunning for that, I promise you.'

' Thou art most wonderful cunning indeed,' replied Jones; ' however I will write to my charmer, since I believe you will be cunning enough to find him to-morrow at the ale-house.'

And now having dismissed the sagacious Partridge, Mr. Jones sat himself down to write, in which em-
ployment

ployment we shall leave him for a time. And here we put an end to the fifteenth book.

BOOK XVI.

Containing the space of five days.

C H A P. I.

Of prologues.

I Have heard of a dramatic writer who used to say, he would rather write a play than a prologue; in like manner, I think, I can with less pains write one of the books of this history, than the prefatory chapter to each of them.

To say the truth; I believe many a hearty curse hath been devoted on the head of that author, who first instituted the method of prefixing to his play that portion of matter which is called the prologue; and which at first was part of the piece itself, but of latter years hath had usually so little connection with the drama before which it stands, that the prologue to one play might as well serve for any other. Those indeed of more modern date, seem all to be written on the same three topics, viz. an abuse of the taste of the town, a condemnation of all cotemporary authors, and an eulogium on the performance just about to be represented. The sentiments in all these are very little varied, nor is it possible they should; and indeed I have often wondered at the great invention of authors, who have been capable of finding such various phrases to express the same thing.

In like manner, I apprehend, some future historian (if any one shall do me the honour of imitating my manner) will, after much scratching his pate, bestow some good wishes on my memory, for having first established these several initial chapters; most of which, like modern prologues, may as probably be prefixed

prefixed to any other book in this history as to that which they introduce, or indeed to any other history as to this.

But however authors may suffer by either of these inventions, the reader will find sufficient emolument in the one, as the spectator hath long found in the other.

First, it is well known, that the prologue serves the critic for an opportunity to try his faculty of hissing, and to tune his cat-call to the best advantage; by which means, I have known those musical instruments so well prepared, that they have been able to play in full concert at the first rising of the curtain.

The same advantages may be drawn from these chapters, in which the critic will be always sure of meeting with something that may serve as a whetstone to his noble spirit; so that he may fall with a more hungry appetite for censure on the history itself. And here his sagacity must make it needless to observe how artfully these chapters are calculated for that excellent purpose; for in these we have always taken care to intersperse somewhat of the sour or acid kind, in order to sharpen and stimulate the said spirit of criticism.

Again, the indolent reader, as well as spectator, finds great advantage from both these; for as they are not obliged either to see the one, or read the others, and both the play and the book are thus protracted, by the former they have a quarter of an hour longer allowed them to sit at dinner, and by the latter they have the advantage of beginning to read at the fourth or fifth page instead of the first; a matter by no means of trivial consequence to persons who read books with no other view than to say they have read them, a more general motive to reading than is commonly imagined; and from which not only law books, and good books, but the pages of Homer and Virgil, of Swift and Cervantes, have been often turned over.

Many other are the emoluments which arise from both

both these; but they are for the most part so obvious that we shall not at present stay to enumerate them; especially since it occurs to us that the principal merit of both the prologue and the preface is that they be short.

C H A P. II.

A whimsical adventure which befel the squire, with the distressed situation of Sophia.

WE must convey the reader to Mr. Western's lodgings, which were in Piccadilly, where he was placed by the recommendation of the landlord at the Hercules Pillars at Hyde-Park Corner; for at that inn, which was the first he saw on his arrival in town, he placed his horses, and in those lodgings, which were the first he heard of, he deposited himself.

Here when Sophia alighted from the hackney-coach, which brought her from the house of lady Bellaston, she desired to retire to the apartment provided for her, to which her father very readily agreed, and whether he attended her himself. A short dialogue, neither very material nor pleasant to relate minutely, then passed between them, in which he pressed her vehemently to give her consent to the marriage with Blifil, who, as he acquainted her, was to be in town in a few days; but instead of complying, she gave a more peremptory and resolute refusal than she had ever done before. This so incensed her father, that after many bitter vows that he would force her to have him whether she would or no, he departed from her with many hard words and curses, locked the door, and put the key into his pocket.

While Sophia was left with no other company than what attend the closest state prisoner, namely, fire and candle, the squire sat down to regale himself over a bottle of wine, with his parson and the landlord of the Hercules Pillars, who, as the squire said, would make an excellent third man, and could inform them of the news of the town, and how affairs went; for to-

be

be sure, says he, he knows a great deal, since the horses of many of the quality stand at his house.

In this agreeable society, Mr. Western past that evening and great part of the succeeding day, during which period nothing happened of sufficient consequence to find a place in this history. All this time Sophia past by herself; for her father swore she should never come out of her chamber alive, unless she first consented to marry Blifil; nor did he ever suffer the door to be unlocked unless to convey her food, on which occasions he always attended himself.

The second morning after his arrival, while he and the parson were at breakfast together on a toast and a tankard, he was informed that a gentleman was below to wait on him.

' A gentleman!' quoth the squire, ' who the devil can he be? Do, doctor, go down and see who 'tis. ' Mr. Blifil can hardly be come to town yet.—Go down, do, and know what his business is.'

The doctor returned with an account that it was a very well drest man, and by the ribbon in his hat he took him for an officer of the army; that he said he had some particular business, which he could deliver to none but Mr. Western himself.

' An officer!' cries the squire, ' what can any such fellow have to do with me? If he wants an order for baggage-waggons, I am no justice of peace here, nor can I grant a warrant.—Let un come up then, if he must speak to me.'

A very genteel man now entered the room; who having made his compliments to the squire, and desired the favour of being alone with him, delivered himself as follows.

" Sir, I come to wait upon you by the command of my lord Fellama; but with a very different message from what I suppose you expect, after what past the other night."

" My lord who?" cries the squire, ' I never heard the name o' un.'

His

' His lordship,' said the gentleman, ' is willing to
impute every thing to the effect of liquor, and the
most trifling acknowledgment of that kind will set
every thing right; for as he hath the most violent
attachment to your daughter, you, sir, are the last
person upon earth, from whom he would resent an
affront; and happy is it for you both that he hath
given such public demonstrations of his courage, as
to be able to put up an affair of this kind, without
danger of any imputation on his honour. All he
desires therefore, is, that you will, before me, make
some acknowledgment; the slightest in the world
will be sufficient; and he intends this afternoon to
pay his respects to you, in order to obtain your leave
of visiting the young lady on the footing of a lover.'

' I don't understand much of what you say, sir,'
said the squire; ' but I suppose, by what you talk
about my daughter, that this is the lord which my
cousin lady Bellaston mentioned to me, and said
something about his courting my daughter. If so
be that how that be the case—you may give my
service to his lordship, and tell un the girl is disposed
of already.'

' Perhaps, Sir,' said the gentleman, ' you are not
sufficiently apprized of the greatness of this offer.
I believe such a person, title, and fortune, would
be no where refused.'

' Looke, Sir,' answered the Squire, ' to be very
plain, my daughter is bespoke already; but if she
was not, I would not marry her to a lord upon
any account; I hate all lords; they are a parcel of
courtiers and Hannoverians, and I will have no-
thing to do with them'—

' Well' Sir,' said the gentleman, ' if that is your
resolution, the message I am to deliver to you, is,
that my lord desires the favour of your company this
morning in Hyde-Park.'

' You may tell my lord,' answered the Squire, that
I am busy and cannot come. I have enough to
look

* look after at home, and cannot stir abroad on any
• account.'

' I am sure, Sir,' quoth the other, ' you are too
• much a gentleman to send such a message; you will
• not, I am convinced, have it said of you, that
• after having affronted a noble peer, you refuse him
• satisfaction. His lordship would have been will-
• ing, from his great regard to the young lady, to
• have made up matters in another way; but unless
• he is to look on you as a father, his honour will not
• suffer his putting up such an indignity as you must
• be sensible you offered him.'

' I offered him!' cries the Squire; ' it is a d—n'd
• lie, I never offered him any thing.'

Upon these words the gentleman returned a very short verbal rebuke, and this he accompanied at the same time with some manual remonstrances, which no sooner reached the ears of Mr. Western, than the worthy Squire began to caper very briskly about the room, bellowing at the same time with all his might, as if desirous to summon a greater number of spectators to behold his agility.

The parson, who had left great part of the tankard unfinished, was not retired far; he immediately attended therefore on the Squire's vociferation, crying, ' bleſſ me Sir, what's the matter?'—' Matter!' quoth the Squire, ' here's a highwayman, I believe, who wants to rob and murder me—for he hath fallen upon me with that stick there in his hand, when I wish I may be d—n'd if I gid un the least provocation.'

' How, Sir,' said the captain, ' did you not tell me
• I ly'd?' .

' No, as I hope to be ſaved,' answered the Squire.
• I believe I might ſay, "'Twas a lie that I had offer-
• ed any affront to my lord,"—' but I never ſaid the
• word you lie.—I understand myself better, and you
• might have understood yourſelf better than to fall
• upon a naked man. If I had a ſtick in my hand,
• you

' you would not have dared to strike me. I'd have
' knocked thy lantern jaws about thy ears. Come
' down into yard this minute, and I'll take about
' with thee at single-stick for a broken head, that I
' will; or I will go into a naked room and box thee
' for a belly-full. At unt half a man, at unt I am
' sure.'

The captain, with some indignation, replied, I
see, Sir, you are below my notice, and I shall in-
form his lordship you are below his.—I am sorry
I have dirtied my fingers with you.'—At which
words he withdrew, the parson interposing to pre-
vent the Squire from stopping him, in which he easily
prevailed, as the other, though he made some ef-
forts for the purpose, did not seem very violently
bent on success. However, when the captain was
departed, the Squire sent many curses and some me-
naces after him; but as these did not set out from his
lips till the officer was at the bottom of the stairs,
and grew louder and louder as he was more and
more remote, they did not reach his ears, or at least
did not retard his departure.

Poor Sophia, however, who in her prison heard
all her father's outcries from first to last, began now
first to thunder with her foot, and afterwards to
scream as loudly as the old gentleman himself had
done before, though in a much sweeter voice. These
screams soon silenced the Squire, and turned all his
consideration towards his daughter, whom he loved
so tenderly, that the least apprehension of any harm
happening to her, threw him presently into agonies:
for except in that single instance in which the whole
future happiness of her life was concerned, she was
sovereign mistress of his inclinations.

Having ended his rage against the captain, with
swearing he would take the law of him, the Squire
now mounted up stairs to Sophia, whom, as soon as
he had unlocked and opened the door, he found all
pale and breathless. The moment however that she
saw

saw her father, she collected all her spirits, and catching him hold by the hand, she cry'd passionately,
‘ O my dear Sir, I am almost frightened to death.’
‘ I hope to heaven no harm hath happened to you.’
‘ No, no,’ cries the Squire, ‘ no great harm. The rascal hath not hurt me much, but rat me if I don’t ha the la o’un.’ ‘ Pray, dear Sir,’ says she, ‘ tell me what’s the matter, who is it that hath infulted you?’ ‘ I don’t know the name o’un,’ answered Western, ‘ some officer fellow I suppose that we are to pay for beating us, but I’ll make him pay this bout, if the rascal hath got any thing, which I suppose he hath not. For thof he was drest out so vine, I question whether he hath got a voot of land in the world.’ ‘ But, dear Sir,’ cries she, ‘ what was the occasion of your quarrel?’ ‘ What should it be, Sophy,’ answered the Squire, ‘ but about you, Sophy. All my misfortunes are about you; and you will be the death of your poor father at last. Here’s a varlet of a lord, the lord knows who forsooth! who hath taan a liking to you, and because I would not gi un my consent, he sent me a kallenge. Come, do be a good girl, Sophy, and put an end to all your father’s troubles; come do, consent to ha un; he will be in town within this day or two; do but promise me to marry un as soon as he comes, and you will make me the happiest man in the world, and I will make you the happiest woman; you shall have the finest cloaths in London, and the finest jewels, and a coach and six at your command. I promised Allworthy already to give up half my estate.—Odrabbet it! I should hardly stick at giving up the whole.’ Will my papa be so kind,’ says she, ‘ as to hear me speak?’ why wout ask, Sophia,’ cries he, ‘ when dost know that I had rather hear thy voice, than the musick of the best pack of dogs in England—Hear thee, my dear little girl! I hope I shall hear thee as long as I live: for if I was ever to lose that pleasure, I would

' would not gee a brass varden to live a moment longer. Indeed, Sophy, you do not know how I love you, indeed you don't, or you never could have run away and left your poor father, who hath no other joy, no other comfort upon earth but his little Sophy.' At these words the tears stood in his eyes ; and Sophia (with the tears streaming from hers) answered, ' indeed, my dear papa, I know you have loved me tenderly, and heaven is my witness how sincerely I have returned your affection ; nor could any thing but an apprehension of being forced into the arms of this man, have driven me to run from a father whom I love so passionately, that I would, with pleasure, sacrifice my life to his happiness ; nay, I have endeavoured to reason myself into doing more, and had almost worked up a resolution, to endure the most miserable of all lives, to comply with your inclinations. It was that resolution alone to which I could not force my mind ; nor can I ever.' Here the Squire began to look wild, and the foam appeared at his lips, which Sophia observing, begged to be heard out, and then proceeded : ' If my father's life, his health, or any real happiness of his was at stake, here stands your resolved daughter, may heaven blast me, if there is a misery I would not suffer to preserve you.—No, that most detested, most loathsome of all lots would I embrace, I would give my hand to Blifil for your sake.' I tell thee, it will preserve me,' answers the father ; ' it will gee me health, happiness, life, every thing.—Upon my soul I shall die if dost refuse me ; I shall break my heart. I shall upon my soul.'—' Is it possible,' says she, ' you can have such a desire to make me miserable ?' I tell you noa,' answered he loudly, ' my whole desire is to make thee happy ; me ! d—n me if there is a thing upon earth I would not do to see thee happy.'— And will not my dear papa allow me to have the least knowledge of what will make me so ? If it be true

' true that happiness consists in opinion ; what must be my condition, when I shall think myself the most miserable of all the wretches upon earth ?? Better think yourself so,' said he than know it by being married to a poor basely vagabond.' ' If it will content you, Sir,' said Sophia, ' I will give you the most solemn promise never to marry him nor any other while my papa lives, without his consent. Let me dedicate my whole life to your service ; let me be again your poor Sophy, and my whole business and pleasure be, as it hath been, to please and divert you.'—' Lookee, Sophy,' answered the squire, ' I am not to chuse in this manner. Your aunt Western would then have reason to think me the fool she doth. No, no, Sophy, I'd have you to know I have got more wisdom, and know more of the world than to take the word of a woman in a matter where a man is concerned.'—' How, Sir, have I deserved this want of confidence ?' said she : ' Have I ever broke a single promise to you ? Or have I ever been found guilty of a falsehood from my cradle ?'—' Lookee, Sophy,' cries he, ' that's neither here nor there. I am determined upon this match, and have him you shall, d—n me if that unt. D—n me that unt, though dost hang thyself the next morning.' At repeating which words he clinched his fist, knit his brows, bit his lips, and thundered so loud, that the poor afflicted, terrified Sophia, sunk trembling into her chair ; and had not a flood of tears come immediately to her relief, perhaps worse had followed.

Western beheld the deplorable condition of his daughter with no more contrition or remorse, than the turnkey of Newgate feels at viewing the agonies of a tender wife, when taking her last farewell of her condemned husband ; or rather he looked down on her with the same emotions which arise in an honest fair tradesman, who sees his debtor dragged to prison for 10l. which, though a just debt, the wretch is wickedly

wickedly unable to pay. Or, to hit the case still more nearly, he felt the same compunction with a bawd, when some poor innocent whom she hath ensnared into her hands, falls into fits at the first proposal of what is called seeing company. Indeed this resemblance would be exact, was it not that the bawd hath an interest in what she doth; and the father, though perhaps he may blindly think otherwise, can in reality have none in urging his daughter to almost an equal prostitution.

In this condition he left his poor Sophia, and departing with a very vulgar observation on the effect of tears, he locked the room, and returned to the parson, who said every thing he durst in behalf of the young lady, which though perhaps it was not quite so much as his duty required, yet was it sufficient to throw the squire into a violent rage, and into many indecent reflections on the whole body of the clergy, which we have too great an honour for that sacred function to commit to paper.

C H A P. III.

What happened to Sophia during her confinement.

THE landlady of the house where the squire lodged had begun very early to entertain a strange opinion of her guests. However, as she was informed that the squire was a man of a vast fortune, and as she had taken care to exact a very extraordinary price for her rooms, she did not think proper to give any offence; for though she was not without some concern for the confinement of poor Sophia, of whose great sweetnes of temper and affability, the maid of the house had made so favourable a report, which was confirmed by all the squire's servants; yet she had much more concern for her own interest, than to provoke one, whom, as she said, she perceived to be a very haftish kind of a gentleman.

Though

Though Sophia eat but little, yet she was regularly served with her meals ; indeed I believe, if she had liked any one rarity, that the Squire, however angry, would have spared neither pains nor cost to have procured it for her ; since, however strange it may appear to some of my readers, he really doated on his daughter, and to give her any kind of pleasure was the highest satisfaction of his life.

The dinner hour being arrived, Black George carried up a pullet, the squire himself (for he had sworn not to part with the key) attending the door. As George deposited the dish, some compliments passed between him and Sophia (for he had not seen her since she left the country, and she treated every servant with more respect than some persons shew to those who are in a very slight degree their inferiors) : Sophia would have had him take the pullet back, saying, she could not eat ; but George begged her to try, and particularly recommended to her the eggs, of which he said it was full.

All this time the squire was waiting at the door ; but George was a great favourite with his master, as his employment was in concerns of the highest nature, namely, about the game, and was accustomed to take many liberties. He had officiously carried up the dinner, being, as he said, very desirous to see his young lady ; he made therefore no scruple of keeping his master standing above ten minutes, while civilities were passing between him and Sophia, for which he received only a good-humoured rebuke at the door when he returned.

The eggs of pullets, partridges, pheasants, &c. were, as George well knew, the most favourite dainties of Sophia. It was therefore no wonder, that he who was a very good-natured fellow, should take care to supply her with this kind of delicacy, at a time when all the servants in the house were afraid she would be starved ; for she had scarce swallowed a single morsel in the last forty hours.

Though vexation hath not the same effect on all persons, as it usually hath on a widow, whose appetite is often rendered sharper than it can be rendered by the air on Bansted Downs, or Salisbury Plain; yet the sublimest grief, notwithstanding what some people may say to the contrary, will eat at last. And Sophia herself, after some little consideration, began to dissect the fowl, which she found to be as full of eggs as George had reported.

But if she was pleased with these, it contained something which would have delighted the Royal Society much more; for if a fowl with three legs be so invaluable a curiosity, when perhaps time hath produced a thousand such, at what price shall we esteem a bird which so totally contradicts all the laws of animal œconomy, as to contain a letter in its belly? Ovid tells us of a flower into which Hyacinthus was metamorphosed, that bears letters on its leaves, which Virgil recommended as a miracle to the Royal Society of his day; but no age nor nation hath ever recorded a bird with a letter in its maw.

But though a miracle of this kind might have engaged all the *Academies de Sciences* in Europe, and perhaps in a fruitless enquiry; yet the reader, by barely recollecting the last dialogue which passed between messieurs Jones and Partridge, will be very easily satisfied from whence this letter came, and how it found its passage into the fowl.

Sophia, notwithstanding her long fast, and notwithstanding her favourite dish was there before her, no sooner saw the letter than she immediately snatched it up, tore it open, and read as follows:

‘ Madam,

‘ Was I not sensible to whom I have the honour
‘ of writing, I should endeavour, however difficult,
‘ to paint the horrors of my mind, at the account
‘ brought me by Mrs. Honour: but as tenderness
‘ alone can have any true idea of the pangs which
‘ tenderness

tenderness is capable of feeling; so can this most amiable quality which my Sophia possesses in the most eminent degree, sufficiently inform her what her Jones must have suffered on this melancholy occasion. Is there a circumstance in the world which can heighten my agonies, when I hear of any misfortune which hath befallen you? Surely there is one only, and with that I am accursed. It is, my Sophia, the dreadful consideration that I am myself the wretched cause. Perhaps I here do myself too much honour; but none will envy me an honour which costs me so extremely dear. Pardon me this presumption, and pardon me a greater still, if I ask you whether my advice, my assistance, my presence, my absence, my death, or my tortures can bring you any relief? Can the most perfect admiration, the most watchful observance, the most ardent love, the most melting tenderness, the most resigned submission to your will, make you amends for what you are to sacrifice to my happiness? If they can, fly, my lovely angel, to those arms which are ever open to receive and protect you; and to which, whether you bring yourself alone, or the riches of the world with you, is, in my opinion, an alternative not worth regarding. If, on the contrary, wisdom shall predominate, and, on the most mature reflection, inform you, that the sacrifice is too great; and if there be no way left to reconcile you to your father, and restore the peace of your dear mind, but by abandoning me, I conjure you to drive me for ever from your thoughts, exert your resolution, and let no compassion for my sufferings bear the least weight in that tender bosom. Believe me, madam, I so sincerely love you better than myself, that my great and principal end is your happiness. My first wish (why would not fortune indulge me in it!) was, and pardon me if I say, still is, to see you every moment the happiest of women; my second wish is to hear you are

so; but no misery on earth can equal mine, while I think you owe an uneasy moment to him who is, madam,

in every sense, and to every purpose,
your devoted

THOMAS JONES.'

What Sophia said, or did, or thought upon this letter, how often she read it, or whether more than once, shall all be left to our reader's imagination. The answer to it he may perhaps see hereafter; but not at present; for this reason, among others, that she did not now write any, and that for several good causes, one of which is this, that she had no paper, pen, nor ink.

In the evening while Sophia was meditating on the letter she had received, or on something else, a violent noise from below disturbed her meditations. This noise was no other than a round bout at altercation between two persons. One of the combatants, by his voice, she immediately distinguished to be her father; but she did not so soon discover the shriller pipes to belong to the organ of her aunt Western, who was just arrived in town, and having, by means of one of her servants, who stopt at the Hercules Pillars, learnt where her brother lodged, she drove directly to his lodgings.

We shall therefore take our leave at present of Sophia, and, with our usual good-breeding, attend her ladyship.

C H A P. IV.

In which Sophia is delivered from her confinement.

THE squire and the parson (for the landlord was now otherwise engaged) were smoking their pipes together, when the arrival of the lady was first signified. The Squire no sooner heard her name, than he immediately ran down to usher her up stairs;

for

for he was a great observer of such ceremonials, especially to his sister, of whom he stood more in awe than of any other human creature, though he never would own this, nor did he perhaps know it himself.

Mrs. Western, on her arrival in the dining-room, having flung herself into a chair, began thus to harangue. ‘ Well, surely no one ever had such an intolerable journey. I think the roads, since so many turnpike acts, are grown worse than ever. La, brother, how could you get into this odious place? No person of condition, I dare swear, ever set foot here before.’ ‘ I don’t know,’ cries the squire, ‘ I think they do well enough; it was landlord recommended them. I thought as he knew most of the quality, he could best shew me where to get among um.’ ‘ Well, and where’s my niece?’ says the lady; ‘ have you been to wait upon lady Bellaston yet?’ ‘ Ay, ay,’ cries the squire, ‘ your niece is safe enough; she is up-stairs in chamber.’ ‘ How,’ answered the lady, ‘ is my niece in this house, and doth she not know of my being here?’ ‘ No, no-body can well get to her,’ says the squire, ‘ for she is under lock and key. I have her safe; I vetched her from my lady cousin the first night I came to town, and I have taken care o’ her ever since; she is as secure as a fox in a bag, I promise you.’ ‘ Good heaven!’ returned Mrs. Western, ‘ what do I hear! I thought what a fine piece of work would be the consequence of my consent to your coming to town yourself; nay, it was indeed your own headstrong will, nor can I charge myself with ever having consented to it. Did not you promise me, brother, that you would take none of these headstrong measures? Was it not by these headstrong measures that you forced my niece to run away from you in the country? Have you a mind to oblige her to take such another step?’ ‘ Z—ds and the devil,’ cries the squire, dash-

ing his pipe on the ground, ‘ did ever mortal hear the like? When I expected you would have commended me for all I have done, to be fallen upon in this manner ! ’ ‘ How ! brother,’ said the lady, ‘ have I ever given you the least reason to imagine I should commend you for locking up your daughter ? Have I not often told you, that women in a free country are not to be treated with such arbitrary power ? We are as free as the men, and I heartily wish I could not say we deserve that freedom better. If you expect I should stay a moment longer in this wretched house, or that I should ever own you again as my relation, or that I should ever trouble myself again with the affairs of your family, I insist upon it that my niece be set at liberty this instant.’ This she spoke with so commanding an air, standing with her back to the fire, with one hand behind her, and a pinch of snuff in the other, that I question whether Thalestris at the head of her Amazons ever made a more tremendous figure. It is no wonder therefore that the poor squire was not proof against the awe which she inspired. ‘ There,’ he cried, throwing down the key, ‘ there it is, do what you please. I intended only to have kept her up till Blifil came to town, which can’t be long; and now if any harm happens in the mean time, remember who is to be blamed for it.’

‘ I will answer it with my life,’ cries Mrs. Western ; ‘ but I shall not intermeddle at all, unless upon one condition, and that is, that you will commit the whole entirely to my care, without taking any one measure yourself, unless I shall eventually appoint you to act. If you ratify these preliminaries, brother, I yet will endeavour to preserve the honour of your family ; if not, I shall continue in a neutral state.’

‘ I pray you, good sir,’ said the parson, ‘ permit yourself to be admonished this once by her ladyship ; peradventure by communing with young madam,

‘ madam Sophia, she will effect more than you have been able to perpetrate by more rigorous measures.’

‘ What dost thee open upon me?’ cries the squire. ‘ If thee dost begin to babble, I shall whip thee presently.’

‘ Fie, brother,’ answered the lady, ‘ is this language to a clergyman? Mr. Supple is a man of sense, and gives you the best advice; and the whole world, I believe, will concur in his opinion; but I must tell you, I expect an immediate answer to my categorical proposal. Either cede your daughter to my disposal, or take her wholly to your own surprizing discretion, and then I here, before Mr. Supple, evacuate the garrison, and renounce you and your family for ever.’

‘ I pray you let me be a mediator,’ cries the parson: ‘ let me supplicate you.’

‘ Why there lies the key on the table,’ cries the squire. ‘ She may take un up, if she pleases; who ‘ hinders her?’

‘ No, brother,’ answered the lady, ‘ I insist on the formality of its being delivered me, with a full ratification of all the concessions stipulated.’

‘ Why then I will deliver it to you—There ’tis,’ cries the squire. ‘ I am sure, sister, you can’t accuse me of ever denying to trust my daughter to you. She hath a lived wi’ you a whole year and muore to a time, without my ever zeeing her.’

‘ And it would have been happy for her,’ answered the lady, ‘ if she had always lived with me. Nothing of this kind would have happened under my eye.’

‘ Ay, certainly,’ cries he, ‘ I only am to blame.’

‘ Why, you are to blame, brother,’ answered she: ‘ I have been often obliged to tell you so, and shall always be obliged to tell you so. However, I hope you will now amend, and gather so much experience from past errors, as not to defeat my wilest

“ wisest machinations by your blunders. Indeed,
“ brother, you are not qualified for these negotia-
“ tions. All your whole scheme of politics is
“ wrong. I once more, therefore, insist, that you
“ do not intermeddle. Remember only what is past.”

“ Z—ds and bl—d, sister,” cries the squire,
“ what would you have me say? You are enough
“ to provoke the devil.”

“ There now,” said she, “ just according to the old
“ custom. I see, brother, there is no talking to you.
“ I will appeal to Mr. Supple, who is a man of sense,
“ if I said any thing which could put any human
“ creature into a passion; but you are so wrong-
“ headed every way.”

“ Let me beg you, madam,” said the parson, “ not
“ to irritate his worship.”

“ Irritate him?” said the lady; — “ sure you are as
“ great a fool as himself. Well, brother, since you
“ have promised not to interfere, I will once more
“ undertake the management of my niece. Lord
“ have mercy upon all affairs which are under the
“ directions of men. The head of one woman is
“ worth a thousand of you.” And now having sum-
“ moned a servant to shew her to Sophia, she departed,
bearing the key with her. .

She was no sooner gone, than the squire (having
first shut the door) ejaculated twenty bitches, and as
many hearty curses against her, not sparing himself
for having ever thought of her estate; but added,
“ Now one hath been a slave so long, it would be a
“ pity to lose it at last, for want of holding out a lit-
“ tle longer. The bitch can’t live for ever, and I
“ know I am down for it upon the will.”

The parson greatly commended this resolution;
and now the squire having ordered in another bottle,
which was his usual method when any thing either
pleased or vexed him, did, by drinking plentifully
of this medicinal julap, so totally wash away his
choler, that his temper was become perfectly placid
and

and serene when Mrs. Western returned with Sophia into the room. The young lady had on her hat and capuchin, and the aunt acquainted Mr. Western, 'that she intended to take her niece with her to her own lodgings; for, indeed, brother,' says she, 'these rooms are not fit to receive a christian soul in.'

'Very well, madam,' quoth Western, 'whatever you please. The girl can never be in better hands than yours; and the parson here can do me the justice to say, that I have said fifty times behind your back, that you was one of the most sensible women in the world.'

'To this,' cries the parson, 'I am ready to bear testimony.'

'Nay, brother,' says Mrs. Western, 'I have always, I'm sure, given you as favourable a character. You must own you have a little too much hastyneſs in your temper; but when you will allow yourself time to reflect, I never knew a man more reasonable.'

'Why then, sister, if you think so,' said the squire, 'here's your good health with all my heart. I am a little passionate sometimes, but I scorn to bear any malice. Sophy, do you be a girl, and do every thing your aunt orders you.'

'I have not the least doubt of her,' answered Mrs. Western. 'She hath had already an example before her eyes, in the behaviour of that wretch her cousin Harriet, who ruined herself by neglecting my advice. —O brother, what think you? You was hardly gone out of hearing, when you set out for London, when who should arrive but that impudent fellow with the odious Irish name—that Fitzpatrick. He broke abruptly upon me without notice, or I would not have seen him. He ran on a long, unintelligible story about his wife, to which he forced me to give him a hearing; but I made him very little answer, and delvered him the letter from his

“ wise, which I bid him answer himself! I suppose
“ the wretch will endeavour to find us out; but I beg
“ you will not see her, for I am determined I will
“ not.”

“ I zee her?” answered the squire; “ you need not
“ fear me. I’ll ge no encouragement to such unduti-
“ ful wenches. It is well for the fellow her husband
“ I was not at houme. Od rabbit it, he shoule have
“ taken a dance thru the horse-pond, I promise un.
“ You zee, Sophy, what undutifulness brings volks to.
“ You have an example in your own family.”

“ Brother,” cries the aunt, “ you need not shock
“ my niece by such odious repittions. Why will
“ you not leave every thing entirely to me? ‘ Well,
“ well, I wull, I wull,’ said the squire.

And now Mrs. Western, luckily for Sophia, put an
end to the conversation, by ordering chairs to be
called. I say luckily; for had it continued much
longer, fresh matter of dissention would, most pro-
bably, have risen between the brother and sister; be-
tween whom education and sex made the only diffe-
rence; for both were equally violent, and equally po-
sitive; they had both a vast affection for Sophia, and
both a sovereign contempt for each other.

C H A P. V.

In which Jones receives a letter from Sophia, and goes to a play with Mrs. Miller and Partridge.

TH E arrival of Black George in town, and the
good offices which that grateful fellow had pro-
mised to do for his old benefactor, greatly comforted
Jones in the midst of all the anxiety and uneasiness
which he had suffered on the account of Sophia; from
whom, by the means of the laid George, he received
the following answer to his letter, which Sophia, to
whom the use of pen, ink, and paper was restored with
her liberty, wrote the very evening when she departed
from her confinement.

SIR,

SIR,

As I do not doubt your sincerity in what you write, you will be pleased to hear that some of my afflictions are at an end, by the arrival of my aunt Western, with whom I am at present, and with whom I enjoy all the liberty I can desire. One promise my aunt hath insisted on my making, which is, that I will not see or converse with any person without her knowledge and consent. This promise I have most solemnly given, and shall most inviolably keep: and though she hath not expressly forbidden me writing, yet that must be an omission from forgetfulness; or this, perhaps, is included in the word conversing. However, as I cannot but consider this as a breach of her generous confidence in my honour, you cannot expect that I shall, after this, continue to write myself, or to receive letters, without her knowledge. A promise is with me a very sacred thing, and to be extended to every thing understood from it, as well as to what is expressed by it; and this consideration may perhaps, on reflection, afford you some comfort. But why should I mention a comfort to you of this kind? For though there is one thing in which I can never comply with the best of fathers, yet am I firmly resolved never to act in defiance of him, or to take any step of consequence without his consent. A firm persuasion of this, must teach you to divert your thoughts from what fortune hath (perhaps) made impossible. This your own interest persuades you. This may reconcile you, I hope, to Mr. Allworthy; and if it will, you have my injunctions to pursue it. Accidents have laid some obligations on me, and your good intentions probably more. Fortune may, perhaps, be sometimes kinder to us both than at present. Believe this, that I shall always think of you as I think you deserve, and am, Sir,
your obliged humble servant,

SOPHIA WESTERN.

' I charge you to write to me no more—at present
 * at least; and accept this, which is now of no ser-
 vice to me, which I know you must want, and
 * think you owe the triflē only to that fortune by
 * which you found it *.'

A child who hath just learnt his letters, would have spelt this letter out in less time than Jones took in reading it. The sensations it occasioned were a mixture of joy and grief; somewhat like what divide the mind of a good man, when he peruses the will of his deceased friend, in which a large legacy, which his distresses make the more welcome, is bequeathed to him. Upon the whole, however, he was more pleased than displeased; and indeed the reader may probably wonder that he was displeased at all; but the reader is not quite so much in love as was poor Jones: and love is a disease, which, though it may in some instances resemble a consumption, (which it sometimes causes) in others proceeds in direct opposition to it, and particularly in this, that it never flatters itself, or sees any one symptom in a favourable light.

One thing gave him complete satisfaction, which was, that his mistress had regained her liberty, and was now with a lady where she might at least assure herself of a decent treatment. Another comfortable circumstance, was the reference which she made to her promise of never marrying any other man: for however disinterested he might imagine his passion, and notwithstanding all the generous overtures made in his letter, I very much question whether he could have heard a more afflicting piece of news, than that Sophia was married to another, tho' the match had been never so great, and never so likely to end in making her completely happy. That refined degree of Platonic affection which is absolutely detached from the flesh, and is indeed entirely and purely

* Meaning, perhaps, the bank bill for 100l.

purely spiritual, is a gift confined to the female part of the creation; many of whom I have heard declare, (and doubtless with great truth) that they would, with the utmost readiness, resign a lover to a rival, when such resignation was proved to be necessary for the temporal interest of such lover. Hence, therefore, I conclude, that this affection is in nature, though I cannot pretend to say I have ever seen an instance of it.

Mr. Jones having spent three hours in reading and kissing the aforesaid letter, and being at last in a state of good spirits, from the last-mentioned considerations, he agreed to carry an appointment, which he had before made, into execution. This was to attend Mrs. Miller, and her younger daughter, into the gallery at the playhouse, and to admit Mr. Partridge as one of the company. For as Jones had really that taste for humour which many affect, he expected to enjoy much entertainment in the criticisms of Partridge; from whom he expected the simple dictates of nature, unimproved indeed, but likewise unadulterated by art.

In the first row then of the first gallery did Mr. Jones, Mrs. Miller, her youngest daughter, and Partridge, take their places. Partridge immediately declared, it was the finest place he had ever been in. When the first music was played, he said, ‘it was a wonder how so many fiddlers could play at one time, without putting one another out.’ While the fellow was lighting the upper candles, he cried out to Mrs. Miller, ‘look, look, madam, the very picture of the man in the end of the common-prayer book, before the gunpowder-treason service.’ Nor could he help observing with a sigh, when all the candles were lighted, ‘that here were candles enough burnt in one night to keep an honest poor family for a twelvemonth.’

As soon as the play, which was Hamlet Prince of Denmark, began, Partridge was all attention, nor did he break silence till the entrance of the ghost; upon

which

which he asked Jones, ‘ What man that was in the ‘ strange dress ; something,’ said he, ‘ like what I ‘ have seen in a picture. Sure it is not armour, is ‘ it ? ’ Jones answered, ‘ That is the ghost.’ To which Partridge replied with a smile, ‘ Persuade me ‘ to that, sir, if you can. Though I cannot say I ‘ ever actually saw a ghost in my life, yet I am cer- ‘ tain I should know one, if I saw him, better than ‘ that comes to. No, no, sir, ghosts don’t appear ‘ in such dresses as that, neither.’ In this mistake, which caused much laughter in the neighbourhood of Partridge, he was suffered to continue, ‘till the scene between the ghost and Hamlet, when Partridge gave that credit to Mr. Garrick, which he had denied to Jones, and fell into so violent a trembling, that his knees knocked against each other. Jones asked him what was the matter, and whether he was afraid of the warrior upon the stage ? ‘ O la, sir,’ said he, ‘ I perceive now it is what you told me. I ‘ am not afraid of any thing ; for I know it is but a ‘ play. And if it really was a ghost, it could do ‘ one no harm at such a distance, and in so much ‘ company ; and yet if I was frightened, I am not ‘ the only person.’ ‘ Why,’ ‘ who,’ cries Jones, ‘ dost thou take to be such a coward here besides ‘ thyself ? ’ ‘ Nay, you may call me coward if you ‘ will ; but if that little man there upon the stage is ‘ not frightened, I never saw any man frightened in ‘ my life. Ay, ay ; “ go along with you ! ” Ay, ‘ to be sure ! Who’s fool then ! Will you ? Lud ‘ have mercy upon such fool-hardiness ! — Whatever ‘ happens it is good enough for you.—“ Follow you ? ” ‘ I’d follow the devil as soon. Nay, perhaps, it is ‘ the devil—for they say he can put on what likeness ‘ he pleases.—Oh ! here he is again.—“ No farther ! ” ‘ No, you have gone far enough already ; farther ‘ than I’d have gone for all the king’s dominions.’ Jones offered to speak, but Partridge cried, ‘ Hush, ‘ hush, deat sir, don’t you hear him ! ’ And during

the

the whole speech of the ghost, he sat with his eyes fixed partly on the ghost, and partly on Hamlet, and with his mouth open ; the same passions which succeeded each other in Hamlet, succeeded likewise in him.

When the scene was over, Jones said, ' Why, Partridge, you exceed my expectations. You enjoy the play more than I conceived possible.' ' Nay, sir,' answered Partridge, if you are not afraid of the devil, I can't help it ; but to be sure it is natural to be surprized at such things, though I know there is nothing in them : not that it was the ghost that surprized me neither ; for I should have known that to have been only a man in a strange dress : but when I saw the little man so frightened himself, it was that which took hold of me.' ' And dost thou imagine then, Partridge,' cries Jones, ' that he was really frightened ?' ' Nay, sir,' said Partridge, ' did not you yourself observe afterwards, when he found it was his own father's spirit, and how he was murdered in the garden, how his fear forsook him by degrees, and he was struck dumb with sorrow, as it were, just as I should have been, had it been my own case.—But hush ! O la ! What noise is that ? There he is again.— Well, to be certain, though I know there is nothing at all in it, I am glad I am not down yonder, where those men are.' Then turning his eyes again upon Hamlet, ' Ay you may draw your sword ; what signifies a sword against the power of the devil ?'

During the second act, Partridge made very few remarks. He greatly admired the fineness of the dresses ; nor could he help observing upon the king's countenance. ' Well,' said he, ' how people may be deceived by faces ? *Nulla fides fronti* is, I find, a true saying. Who would think, by looking in the king's face, that he had ever committed a murder ?' He then enquired after the ghost ; but Jones,

who

who intended he should be surprized, gave him no other satisfaction, ‘ than that he might possibly see ‘ him again soon, and in a flash of fire.’

Partridge sat in fearful expectation of this; and now, when the ghost made his next appearance, Partridge cried out, ‘ There, sir, now; what say you ‘ now? Is he frightened now or no? As much ‘ frightened as you think me, and to be sure, no- ‘ body can help some fears, I would not be in so ‘ bad a condition as what’s his name, squire Hamlet, ‘ is there, for all the world. Bless me! What’s be- ‘ come of the spirit? As I am a living soul, I thought ‘ I saw him sink into the earth.’ ’ Indeed you saw ‘ right,’ answered Jones. ‘ Well, well,’ cries Par- tridge, ‘ I know it is only a play; and besides, if ‘ there was any thing in all this, madam Miller ‘ would not laugh so: for as to you, sir, you would ‘ not be afraid, I believe, if the devil was here in ‘ person.—There, there—Ay, no wonder you are ‘ in such a passion; shake the vile wicked wretch to ‘ pieces. If she was my own mother I should serve ‘ her so. To be sure, all duty to a mother is forfeit- ‘ ed by such wicked doings.—Ay, go about your bu- ‘ siness; I hate the sight of you.’

Our critic was now pretty silent till the play, which Hamlet introduces before the king. This he did not at first understand, till Jones explained it to him; but he no sooner entered into the spirit of it, than he began to bless himself that he had never committed murder. Then turning to Mrs. Miller, he asked her, ‘ If she did not imagine the king looked as if he ‘ was touched; though he is,’ said he, ‘ a good actor, ‘ and doth all he can to hide it. Well, I would not ‘ have so much to answer for, as that wicked man ‘ there hath, to sit upon a much higher chair than he ‘ sits upon.—No wonder he run away; for your ‘ sake I’ll never trust an innocent face again.’

The grave-digging scene next engaged the attention of Partridge, who expressed much surprize at

the number of skulls thrown upon the stage. To which Jones answered, ‘ That it was one of the most famous burial-places about town.’ ‘ No wonder then,’ cries Partridge, ‘ that the place is haunted. But I never saw in my life a worse grave-digger. I had a sexton when I was a clerk, that should have dug three graves while he is digging one. The fellow handles a spade as if it was the first time he had ever had one in his hands. Ay, ay, you may sing. You had rather sing than work, I believe.’ —Upon Hamlet’s taking up the skull, he cried out, ‘ Well, it is strange to see how fearless some men are : I never could bring myself to touch any thing belonging to a dead man on any account. —He seemed frightened enough too at the ghost I thought. *Nemo omnibus horis sapit.*’

Little more worth remembering occurred during the play ; at the end of which Jones asked him, ‘ which of the players he liked best ?’ To this he answered, with some appearance of indignation at the question, ‘ The king without doubt.’ ‘ Indeed, Mr. Partridge,’ says Mrs. Miller, ‘ you are not of the same opinion with the town ; for they are all agreed, that Hamlet is acted by the best player who was ever on the stage.’ ‘ He the best player ;’ cries Partridge, with a contemptuous sneer, ‘ Why I could act as well as he myself. I am sure if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did. And then to be sure, in that scene, as you called it, between him and his mother, where you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help me, any man, that is, any good man, that had such a mother, would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me ; but, indeed, madam, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country ; and the king for my money ; he speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the other.—Any body may see he is an actor.’

While

While Mrs. Miller was thus engaged in conversation with Partridge, a lady came up to Mr. Jones, whom he immediately knew to be Mrs. Fitzpatrick. She said she had seen him from the other part of the gallery, and had taken that opportunity of speaking to him, as she had something to say, which might be of great service to himself. She then acquainted him with her lodgings, and made him an appointment the next day in the morning; which, upon recollection, she presently changed to the afternoon; at which time Jones promised to attend her.

Thus ended the adventure of the playhouse; where Partridge had afforded great mirth, not only to Jones and Mrs. Miller, but to all who sat within hearing, who were more attentive to what he said, than to anything that passed on the stage.

He durst not go to bed all that night, for fear of the ghost; and for many nights after, sweated for two or three hours before he went to sleep, with the same apprehensions, and waked several times in great horrors, crying out, ‘Lord have mercy upon us! there it is!’

C H A P. VI.

In which the history is obliged to go back.

IT is almost impossible for the best parent to observe an exact impartiality to his children, even though no superior merit should bias his affection; but sure a parent can hardly be blamed, when that superiority determines his preference.

As I regard all the personages of this history in the light of my children; so I must confess the same inclination of partiality to Sophia; and for that I hope the reader will allow me the same excuse, from the superiority of her character.

This extraordinary tenderness, which I have for my heroine, never suffers me to quit her any long time without the utmost reluctance. I could now, therefore, return impatiently to enquire, what hath happened

peneD to this lovely creature since her departure from her father's, but that I am obliged first to pay a short visit to Mr. Blifil.

Mr. Western, in the first confusion into which his mind was cast, upon the sudden news he received of his daughter, and in his first hurry to go after her, had not once thought of sending any account of the discovery to Blifil. He had not gone far, however, before he recollect ed himself, and accordingly stopt at the very first inn he came to, and dispatched away a messenger to acquaint Blifil with his having found Sophia, and with his firm resolution to marry her to him immediately, if he would come up after him to town.

As the love which Blifil had for Sophia was of that violent kind, which nothing but the loss of her fortune; or some such accident, could lessen, his inclination to the match was not at all altered by her having run away, though he was obliged to lay this to his own account. He very readily, therefore, embraced this offer. Indeed, he now proposed the gratification of a very strong passion besides avarice, by marrying this young lady, and this was hatred : for he concluded that matrimony afforded an equal opportunity of satisfying either hatred or love; and this opinion is very probably verified by much experience. To say the truth, if we are to judge by the ordinary behaviour of married persons to each other, we shall perhaps be apt to conclude, that the generality seek the indulgence of the former passion only in their union of every thing but of hearts.

There was one difficulty, however, in his way, and this arose from Mr. Allworthy. That good man, when he found by the departure of Sophia (for neither that, nor the cause of it, could be concealed from him) the great aversion which she had for his nephew, began to be seriously concerned that he had been deceived into carrying matters so far. He by no means concurred with the opinions of those parents, who think

think it as immaterial to consult the inclinations of their children in the affair of marriage, as to solicit the good pleasure of their servants when they intend to take a journey; and who are, by law or decency at least, withheld often from using absolute force. On the contrary, as he esteemed the institution to be of the most sacred kind, he thought every preparatory caution necessary to preserve it holy and inviolate; and very wisely concluded, that the surest way to effect this, was by laying the foundation in previous affection.

Blifil indeed soon cured his uncle of all anger on the score of deceit, by many vows and protestations that he had been deceived himself, with which the many declarations of Western very well tallied; but now to persuade Allworthy to consent to the renewing his addresses, was a matter of such apparent difficulty, that the very appearance was sufficient to have deterred a less enterprising genius; but this young gentleman so well knew his own talents, that nothing within the province of cunning seemed to him hard to be achieved.

Here then he represented the violence of his own affection, and the hopes of subduing aversion in the lady by perseverance. He begged that in an affair on which depended all his future repose, he might at least be at liberty to try all fair means for success. Heaven forbid, he said, that he should ever think of prevailing by any other than the most gentle methods! ‘Besides, sir,’ said he, ‘if they fail, you may then ‘(which will be surely time enough) deny your consent.’ He urged the great and eager desire which Mr. Western had for the match, and lastly, he made great use of the name of Jones, to whom he imputed all that had happened; and from whom, he said, to preserve so valuable a young lady was even an act of charity.

All these arguments were well seconded by Thwackum, who dwelt a little stronger on the authority of parents

parents than Mr. Blifil himself had done. He ascribed the measures which Mr. Blifil was desirous to take, to christian motives; ‘and though’ says he, ‘the good young gentleman hath mentioned charity last, I am almost convinced, it is his first and principal consideration.’

Square, possibly, had he been present, would have sung to the same tune, though in a different key, and would have discovered much moral fitness in the proceeding; but he was now gone to Bath for the recovery of his health.

Allworthy, though not without reluctance, at last yielded to the desires of his nephew. He said, he would accompany him to London, where he might be at liberty to use every honest endeavour to gain the lady: ‘But I declare,’ said he, ‘I will never give my consent to any absolute force being put on her inclinations, nor shall you ever have her, unless she can be brought freely to compliance.’

Thus did the affection of Allworthy for his nephew betray the superior understanding to be triumphed over by the inferior; and thus is the prudence of the best of heads often defeated, by the tenderness of the best of hearts.

Blifil having obtained this unhop'd-for acquiescence in his uncle, rested not till he carried his purpose into execution. And as no immediate business required Mr. Allworthy's presence in the country, and little preparation is necessary to men for a journey, they set out the very next day, and arrived in town that evening, when Mr. Jones, as we have seen, was diverting himself with Partridge at the play.

The morning after his arrival, Mr. Blifil waited on Mr. Western, by whom he was most kindly and graciously received, and from whom he had every possible assurance (perhaps more than was possible) that he should very shortly be as happy as Sophia could make him; nor would the squire suffer the young gentle-

gentleman to return to his uncle, till he had, almost against his will, carried him to his sister.

C H A P. VII.

In which Mr. Western pays a visit to his sister, in company with Mr. Blifil.

MRS. Western was reading a lecture on prudence and matrimonial politics to her niece, when her brother and Blifil broke in with less ceremony than the laws of visiting require. Sophia no sooner saw Blifil than she turned pale, and almost lost the use of all her faculties; but her aunt on the contrary waxed red, and having all her faculties at command, began to exert her tongue on the squire.

' Brother,' said she, ' I am astonished at your behaviour: will you never learn any regard to decorum? Will you still look upon every apartment as your own, or as belonging to one of your country tenants? Do you think yourself at liberty to invade the privacies of women of condition, without the least decency or notice?' ——
 ' Why, what a pox is the matter now,' quoth the squire, ' one would think I had caught you at' —
 ' None of your brutality, Sir, I beseech you,' answered she.—' You have surprised my poor niece so that she can hardly, I see, support herself.—Go, my dear, retire, and endeavour to recruit your spirits; for I see you have occasion.' At which words, Sophia, who never received a more welcome command, hastily withdrew.

' To be sure, sister,' cries the squire ' you are mad, when I have brought Mr. Blifil here to court her, to force her away.'

' Sure, brother,' says she, ' you are worse than mad, when you know in what situation affairs are, to—I am sure, I ask Mr. Blifil pardon, but he knows very well to whom to impute so disagreeable a reception. For my own part, I am sure I shall always

' always be very glad to see Mr. Blifil; but his own good sense would not have suffered him to proceed so abruptly, had not you compelled him to it.'

Blifil bowed and stammered, and looked like a fool; but Western, without giving him time to form a speech for the purpose, answered. ' Well, well, I 'an to blame if you will, I always am, certainly; but come, let the girl be fetched back again, or let Mr. Blifil go to her—He's come up on purpose, and there's no time to be lost.'

' Brother,' cries Mrs. Western, ' Mr. Blifil, I am confident, understands himself better than to think of seeing my niece any more this morning after what hath happened. Women are of a nice texture; and our spirits, when disordered, are not to be recomposed in a moment. Had you suffered Mr. Blifil to have sent his compliments to my niece, and to have desired the favour of waiting on her in the afternoon, I should possibly have prevailed on her to have seen him; but now I despair of bringing about any such matter.'

' I am very sorry, madam,' cried Blifil, ' that Mr. Western's extraordinary kindness to me, which I can never enough acknowledge, should have occasioned—' ' Indeed, Sir,' said she, interrupting him, ' you need make no apologies, we all know my brother so well.'

' I don't care what any body knows of me,' answered the squire;—' but when must he come to see her? for consider, I tell you, he is come up on purpose, and so is Allworthy.'—' Brother,' said she, ' whatever message Mr. Blifil thinks proper to send to my niece, shall be delivered to her; and I suppose she will want no instructions to make a proper answer. I am convinced she will not refuse to see Mr. Blifil at a proper time.'—' The devil she won't,' answered the squire.—' Odibud!—don't we know,—I say nothing, but some volk are wiser than all the world.—If I might have had my will,

' she

' she had not run away be ore: and now I expect to
' hear every moment she is guone again. For as
' great a fool as some volk thinks me, I know very
' well she hates'—‘ No matter, brother,’ replied
Mrs. Western, ‘ I will not hear my niece abused. It
is a reflection on my family. She is an honour
to it; and she will be an honour to it, I pro-
mise you. I will pawn my whole reputation in
the world on her conduct.—I shall be glad
to see you, brother, in the afternoon; for I have
somewhat of importance to mention to you.—
‘ At present, Mr. Blifil, as well as you, must excuse
me; for I am in haste to dress.’—‘ Well, but,’
said the squire, ‘ do appoint a time.’—‘ Indeed,’ said
she, I can appoint no time.—I tell you, I will see
you in the afternoon.’—‘ What the devil would
you have me do?’ cries the squire, turning to Blifil,
‘ I can no more turn her, than a beagle can turn an
old hare. Perhaps she will be in a better humour in
the afternoon.’—‘ I am condemned, I see, sir, to
misfortune,’ answered Blifil, ‘ but I shall always
own my obligations to you.’—He then took a cere-
monious leave of Mrs. Western, who was altogether
as ceremonious on her part; and then they departed;
the squire muttering to himself with an oath, that
Blifil should see his daughter in the afternoon.

If Mr. Western was little pleased with this inter-
view, Blifil was less. As to the former, he imputed
the whole behaviour of his sister to her humour
only, and to her dissatisfaction at the omission of
ceremony in the visit; but Blifil saw a little deeper
into things. He suspected somewhat of more con-
sequence, from two or three words which dropt
from the lady; and, to say the truth, he suspected
right, as will appear when I have unfolded the seve-
ral matters which will be contained in the following
chapter.